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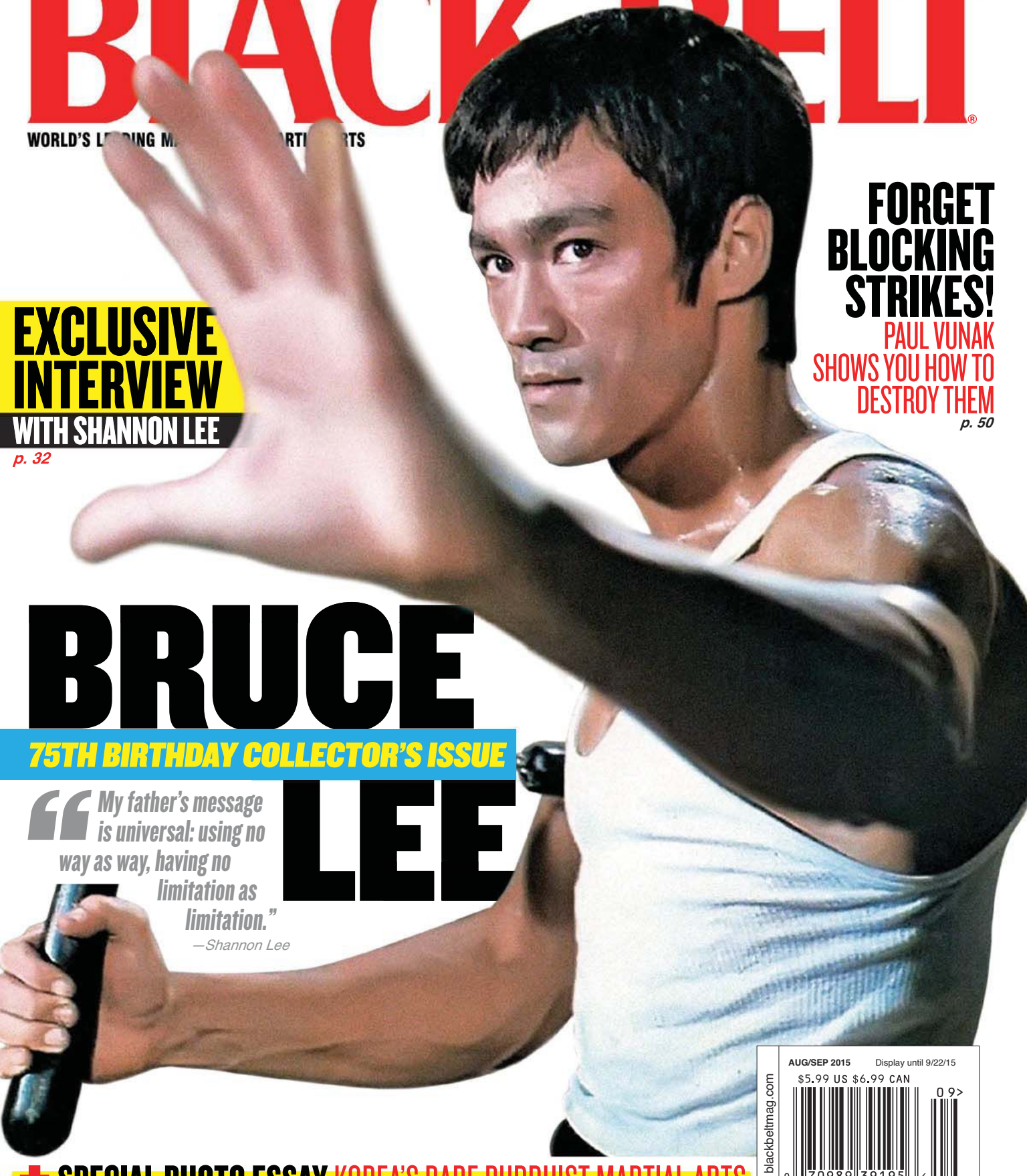

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

WITH SHANNON LEE

p. 32

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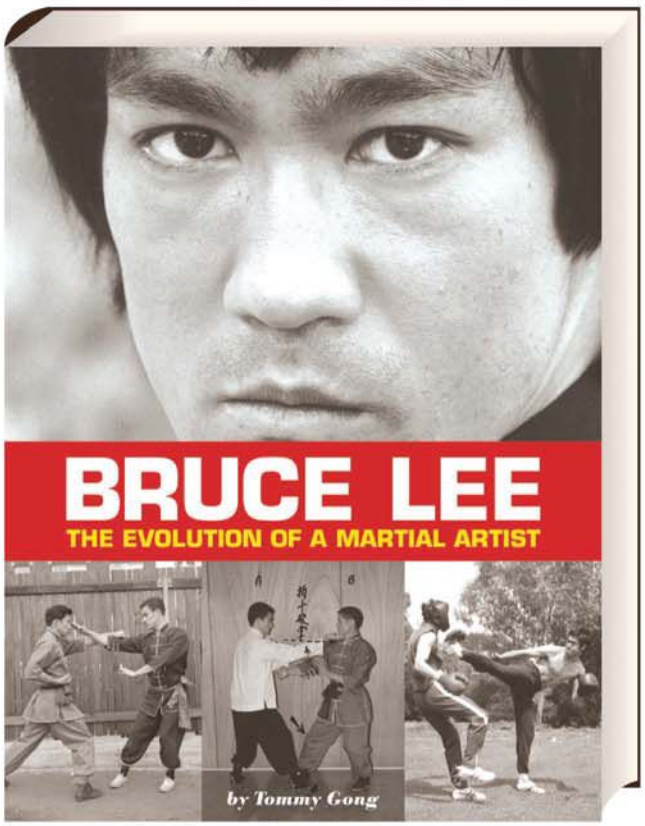

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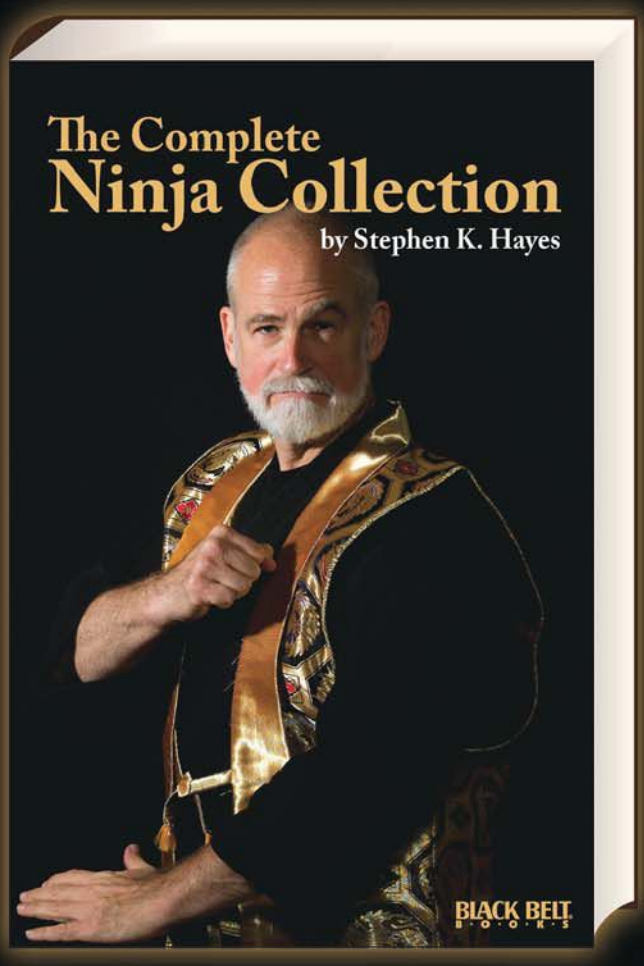

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LONG LIVE LEE JUN FAN!

Bruce Lee oozes from the issue. In some instances, it's totally intentional, and in at least one, it's purely coincidental.

Obviously, we have the "Little Dragon" on the cover. Thanks to Shannon Lee and the Bruce Lee Foundation for providing the classic image.

Also in the intentional department: We have first-generation JKD student Richard Bustillo teaching the "5 Gates of Jeet Kune Do." Four of those gates, he writes, come from the *wing chun* he picked up while training with Bruce Lee and Dan Inosanto in the 1960s, while the remaining one is derived from his ongoing practice of *jeet kune do* and boxing.

In the intentional-but-also-coincidental department, we have JKD and Filipino martial arts authority Paul Vunak, who's here to conduct a short seminar on the science of destructions. The author's impetus for doing the story was twofold: the plight of Anderson Silva, who suffered a broken leg in the UFC 168 when his opponent put his knee in the path of a kick, and the plight of Mike Tyson, who sustained a broken finger when he threw a punch at Donnie Yen on the set of *Ip Man 3* and Yen's elbow got in the way.

I say "intentional" because the story has been in the works for some time (the Silva incident happened in late 2013), and I say "coincidental" because it was the Tyson incident, which took place a few weeks ago, that prompted us to run the piece in this issue.

Now, the inclusion of "Buddhist Martial Arts of Korea: Emerging From the Shadow of Shaolin" in a Bruce Lee issue is totally coincidental. The story is composed of photos I shot in South Korea during the years I spent there researching the peninsula's martial arts. I recently ran across the negatives from that period, had them scanned and figured they make a fine photo essay depicting a rare martial art.

How exactly does this relate to Bruce Lee? It's somewhat of a stretch, but bear with me. Back in the 1970s, Lee conceived of the *Kung Fu* TV series with himself as the lead. Of course, that character was a Shaolin Buddhist monk. Unfortunately, Hollywood execs weren't convinced that an Asian leading man was a safe bet, so they chose David Carradine to play Kwai Chang Caine.

Connection made: Bruce Lee … supposed to portray the priest … Shaolin Temple … Korea's temple martial arts.

And then there's the cover story, which takes us back to the "intentional" category. In it, Shannon Lee details the latest and greatest projects she has going on. To me, one of the most memorable parts of the interview is this exchange:

Q: Tommy Gong, author of *Bruce Lee: The Evolution of a Martial Artist,* recently dropped by our office and mentioned … that you're working hard to spread knowledge of your father's philosophies.

A: "This is why I'm involved in the business, honestly. If my father had made a handful of kick-ass movies in the '70s and there was an opportunity to exploit that by putting photos on T-shirts to make money — I wouldn't be interested in putting all my energy into that.

"The thing I want to put my energy toward is the philosophy. So much value comes from being around that and trying to live my life in a better way, the self-actualization and self-cultivation, who I am and what walking my own path means. It's inspirational. …"

The staff of *Black Belt* hopes you find all of this issue inspirational.

— Robert W. Young
Editor-in-Chief

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TIMES

MARTIAL ARTS NEWS YOU CAN USE. READ IT - KNOW IT - LIVE IT

Left to right: Screenwriter Gary Goldman with actors James Hong, Lia Chang, Gerald Okamura and George Cheung.

Photo by Tami Chang/Inset Photo by Lia Chang, liachangphotography.com

Peter Kwong and the action figures based on his character.

BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE CHINA — THE REUNION

Cast members Peter Kwong (left) and Gerald Okamura.

Veteran actor James Hong

Photos by Lia Chang, liachangphotography.com

"They have returned. And this time, they are not alone!"

— David Lo Pan

On an otherwise normal Wednesday night (well, as normal as Los Angeles gets), in an otherwise normal corner of the Little Tokyo district, in the otherwise normal and oh-so-dignified Japanese American National Museum, a normal visitor expecting a normal museum visit might have been shocked right down to his soles as he rounded an otherwise normal corner and stumbled on a reunion of the greatest collection of kung fu villains (and a few heroes) ever gathered. Who were they? The cast and creators of *Big Trouble in Little China.*

"Wang, these Sing Dings …"

"Chang Sings."

"They got enemies?"

"Wing Kong."

"Who wear red turbans?"

"Holy … Jack, these guys are animals!"

Hosting a special screening of the 1986 cult classic that many martial artists and kung fu fans call their fave, the theater was positively packed with more famous faces, martial masters and original cast members than you could shake a "six demon bag" at.

Representatives from both of the film's "fighting tongs" — the Chang Sing (the good guys) and the Wing Kong (the bad guys with the much cooler black-and-red uniforms) were in attendance and mingling freely with fans in the lobby before the show. In fact, so many fans showed up for the charity event that the film started 30 minutes late while cast members made sure everyone who wanted a picture or autograph got one.

"We really shook the Pillars of Heaven, didn't we, Wang?"

After the credits and applause finally ended, the cast and creators came down front for an exclusive question-and-answer session with the audience. Writer Gary Goldman wowed fans with the revelation that in the original version of the screenplay, bumbling hero Jack Burton was an Old West cowboy who stumbles into a 19th-century Chinatown while trying to retrieve a stolen horse. However, studio execs, director John Carpenter and star Kurt Russell decided that the film would be more appealing to audiences if it had a contemporary setting, so Jack became a trucker and his horse "Porkchop" became a stolen big rig named "The Porkchop Express."

Perennial kung fu bad guy Gerald Okamura — when not busy trying to stir up some extra big trouble by leading the audience in chants of "Wing Kong! Wing Kong!" during the bemused Chang Sing actors' speeches — regaled everyone with the tale of how he brought his whole collection of exotic kung fu weaponry to his audition, then was surprised to be given a pair of gold-plated pistols instead.

Legendary henchman Al Leong recalled that he wasn't originally cast in the film but was later hired by Carpenter after a chance encounter with him. James Lew and Jeff Imada, both of whom went from *Big Trouble* to big careers as big-time fight choreographers and stuntmen, credited the film for being their first big break.

Other cast members — including Eric Lee, Peter Kwong, George Cheung and Lia Chang (who also co-starred in *The Last Dragon)* — took turns answering questions and sharing their favorite recollections of making the milestone movie. However, it was James Hong who had the most poignant memory to share.

"Indeed!"

Several decades older than the rest of the cast, Hong — who played the lead villain, the undead wizard David Lo Pan — said that the filming of *Big Trouble in Little China* will always be near and dear to his heart because it marked the first time in his 60-plus-year film career that he'd been part of a (practically) all-Asian cast in a big-budget American movie.

"In front of the camera, there was Kurt Russell and Kim Cattrall — two Caucasians — and everyone else was Asian," Hong recalled. "We still have a way to go, but that was the first time I ever thought to myself, 'Wow, we have finally arrived!'"

And then the evil Lo Pan smiled and shed a tear.

— Jason William McNeil

COMPANY DEVELOPING WOMEN'S ARMOR FOR WEAPONS COMPETITION

Unified Weapons Master, an Australia-based firm that's promoting a new form of competition revolving around weapons combat, has revealed plans to develop the Lorica Amazon, a version of its unique armor that will enable women to take part in future events.

UWM has spent the past four years refining the prototype of the men's armor, with the design expected to be finalized later this year. The armor uses the company's proprietary sensor technology and medical algorithms to determine what damage would have been sustained by the competitor had he or she not been wearing the protective suit. The information is collected from 54 sensors spread out across the body, with many being read thousands of times a second. It's then wirelessly sent to an advanced scoring system that allows analysis of every strike, including its force, location and trauma profile.

"With women, it is particularly important to protect the top of the pelvis and hips, as these areas are more vulnerable for women than for men," said Justin Forsell, chairman of UWM. "The most significant difference to the woman's armor is the design of the chest plate, which will feature interchangeable pieces to allow for adjustments to be made to fit various sizes. We are also looking at a special helmet design with a more feminine look."

UWM consulted with Samantha Swords, an experienced medieval close-combat fighter, to get her input for the female armor design and the prospect of a competition for women.

"I am very excited to see how the UWM female armor will look, and I think that it'll certainly bring a lot of exposure to weapons-based martial arts forms that perhaps many people don't even know about," she said. "It's fantastic to see UWM will be opening up the competition to women, which will enable greater diversity in combat styles. The way women fight can be quite different to men, so audiences can expect to see different visual possibilities."

Forsell said that UWM had received many inquiries from men and women who want to participate in the inaugural competition, which is planned for 2016.

CENTURY PARTNERS WITH AMERICAN TOP TEAM'S RICARDO LIBORIO

Century Martial Arts has joined forces with famed instructor and American Top Team co-founder Ricardo Liborio. The relationship makes Century Liborio's exclusive equipment provider and means that Liborio will assist the Century research-and-development team with the testing and marketing of new products. It also means Liborio will be a featured demonstrator at the 2015 Martial Arts SuperShow in Las Vegas.

"There are so many exciting things going on at Century, and I'm happy to team up with them to help develop new products and grow the martial arts community," Liborio said. "Century is part of my martial arts family, a group that I've grown with through the years. I'm looking forward to working with their great team to create innovative and functional new products."

A native of Brazil, Liborio helped form Brazilian Top Team before joining Dan Lambert in 2001 to create American Top Team. In the nearly 15 years since its inception, American Top Team has spread across the country with more than 40 locations and has produced countless champions. As head instructor, Liborio has coached many of those martial artists. That, combined with his own extensive training, gives him unique insight into products and apparel that Century looks forward to utilizing.

"We are more than excited about our partnership with world-renowned martial artist Ricardo Liborio," stated Paul Webb, president of Century Martial Arts. "Throughout his career, master Liborio has taught the same tenets to his students as we pride ourselves on at Century: respect, humility and hard work, along with a true passion for martial arts."

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NEWS BITES

Kenpo 5.0 founder **Jeff Speakman** is in talks to develop a reality-TV series called **Perfect Weapons.** A promo piece is available on YouTube.

Some local Japanese politicians have teamed up to create council to foster **ninja-themed tourism** during the **2020 Olympics** in Tokyo.

The **taekwondo** skills of **Paige McPherson,** a **bronze medalist** at the 2012 **Olympics,** were featured in a two-minute-plus online ad from **Mercedes-Benz.**

Beth Tarini has launched a campaign to raise funds to study how **taekwondo** can be used to **treat ADHD.** crowdrise.com/fightadhd

SoCal **hapkido** master **Fariborz Azhakh** appeared with host and former **NFL player Tony Gonzalez** on a National Geographic show investigating the "unbendable arm." A promo piece for the segment, called *You Can't Lick Your Elbow,* is on YouTube.

Morné Swanepoel, a South Africa–based martial arts teacher, MMA coach and fitness instructor, has joined the *Black Belt* staff as a **blogger.** Read his posts at **blackbeltmag.com.**

Destiny Reyes has created a **GoFundMe** page to raise money for **Ernie Reyes Jr.** "My brother Ernie Reyes Jr. was recently in the ICU (Intensive Care Unit) fighting for his life suffering from **kidney failure,"** she posted. "Ernie is now home and currently undergoing **dialysis** treatment 3 times per week for 4 hours a day while waiting for a kidney transplant." Find out how you can help at **gofundme.com/erjrofficial.**

A group of **martial arts–practicing nuns** in **Nepal** refused official efforts to evacuate them so they could administer aid to victims of the recent **magnitude-7.8 earthquake.**

Kung-fu Kingdom has posted a **10/10 review** of **Bruce Lee's Fighting Method: The Complete Edition.** kungfukingdom.com/bruce-lees-fighting-method-book-review/

The **Melissa McCarthy** comedy **Spy** opened to positive reviews from martial artists looking for a laugh. The fisticuffs in the film come courtesy of **Diana Lee Inosanto.** "I taught her **kali** and **JKD** to prepare her for her role," she said.

Black Belt Hall of Famer and **judo** icon **Hayward Nishioka** was recently promoted to **ninth dan.**

Tony Blauer's Annual **Combatives Camp** will take place August 22-23, 2015, in **Las Vegas.**

Kung fu great **Dennis Brown** has been selected to play the American coach in **Shanghai Dragons,** a U.S.-China joint venture that's slated to begin filming in August 2015. Release is scheduled for May 2016.

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Dojo Serves as Launchpad for Top Tricker!

The mother of a former student dropped by the *dojo* recently. "Did you know that Kyle is working in the entertainment business now?" she asked. "He's done a lot of jobs in the industry and was even in the remake of *Footloose*."

by Floyd Burk

Her announcement jogged my memory, and recollections from 14 years ago started surfacing. For seven years, Kyle Cordova took karate lessons from my wife Martha and me. He was a standout, and we were looking forward to mentoring him for many years, but his family relocated to Sacramento, California, when he was 10.

Words from his mom Realynn brought me back to the present: "Kyle credits you and *sensei* Martha for helping him get where he is today. So do I."

Eager to talk about her son, Realynn explained that he'd doubled the lead actor in *Footloose* for the angry dance scene in which Ren does his acrobatic routine and for the scene in which he does a flip off the back of a truck.

Having worked with several people in show business over the years, I wondered out loud if Kyle had earned his Screen Actors Guild card yet. It didn't take long to get an answer because Kyle, along with his father and brother, appeared in the doorway. Instead of the fuzzy-headed kid I remembered, he was now a 6-foot-tall athlete with the good looks of a leading man.

Responding to my question, Kyle pulled out his SAG card and smiled.

KYLE'S RISE IN THE BIZ wasn't by accident. It started 20 years ago, he said, when my wife gave the 4-year-old his first lesson at a local rec center. A year later, he transferred to our Trad Am Karate studio, where we both trained him to black belt.

I remembered the determined young martial artist participating in every available activity. He attended regular classes, open workouts and Friday-night sparring sessions. He took part in all the camps and seminars and was a regular at tournaments. In fact, he was overall grand champion in a local point series in 2001.

That same year, Kyle earned his black belt. Then we got the news that the Cordovas were moving. Losing this star student was a bummer for the whole dojo.

I asked Kyle about his memories from our time together. He said one of the most vivid involved turning 8 and wishing he could test for his black belt. "But I couldn't due to my age," he said. "For two years, I received no real promotions. This didn't bother me because I had my eyes on the prize. But I knew what I had to do to achieve my goal. Earning my black belt was one of my favorite accomplishments in life."

FOR KYLE, a career-changing moment came at the 2003 Compete Nationals, where he was representing his new dojo, Adam Hamlin's Folsom Karate Academy. People were "tricking," and it fascinated the youth.

"Tricking originated on the sport-karate circuit in the early 1990s because competitors wanted to add more difficulty and showmanship to their routines," Kyle said. "It's a mixture of martial arts, gymnastics and acrobatics with martial arts being the core aspect. I instantly became captivated with tricking, and if Mr. Hamlin never took me to the Compete, I'm not sure where I would be today."

Kyle set out to learn more about tricking — with his parents' full support. "He started to trick at age 13," Realynn said. "We sent him to gymnastics classes and signed him up for private lessons. He went to tricking camps. We even got him personal instruction with a well-known tricker. Kyle did a lot of learning on his own, too. He'd watch videos and then try the tricks himself. He crashed and burned many times, but his perseverance was un-

Photo Courtesy of Floyd Burk

stoppable. His martial arts training was the backbone of his work ethic and stick-to-itiveness."

OVER THE YEARS, Kyle developed his own style of tricking, a blend of classical martial arts techniques, intricate transitions and power moves. "It is mental and physical stimulation," he said. "You grow to love the rush of adrenaline before, during and after landing the trick because in that moment, you're free from problems and stress, from anything and everything. In those couple of seconds, you are the trick. Everything in your mind and body is pushing itself toward the execution of the maneuver. You're in your own world."

If you're wondering how free-spirited tricking translates to showbiz success, you're not alone. For the answer, think about what you see on television. Everywhere you look — movies, music videos, commercials — people are flipping and twisting, kicking and punching. That performance-oriented form of martial arts is tricking, and producers and casting agents are constantly looking for people who can do it.

That's not to imply that tricking is guaranteed to put you on the fast track to success, Kyle said. As proof, he explained the twists and turns his career has taken: "In 2010 I stopped competing and convinced my mom to let me move to Los Angeles. The first couple of months, I slept on my friend's floor on a blow-up mattress. I eventually moved into an apartment with my friends. During this time, I also signed with an agency. My first job was a music video with Chris Brown called *12 Strands: Matrix."*

The *Footloose* role started with a cattle-call audition at which hundreds of hopefuls vied for chances to be dancers and extras, Kyle said. "Immediately after my audition, the choreographer asked about my measurements and if I'd ever doubled someone. I had not, but I told him it was something I was highly interested in. Within one day, my agency contacted me, telling me I was booked as the double [for the lead actor]."

KYLE'S RESUME quickly grew. It now includes music videos with Rihanna, Justin Bieber, Nicole Sherzinger and Chris Brown, as well as tricking performances at the Billboard Music Awards, Billboard Latin Music Awards and MTV Video Music Awards. He's appeared at fashion shows and corporate events, and worked on *Glee* and *The Goldbergs.* He's tricked on *The Voice* and *Dancing With the Stars.* He's taught his craft to celebrities, which builds connections that often lead to jobs being booked without having to audition.

"A couple of years ago, the industry didn't even know what a tricker was," Kyle said. "Now auditions will list the word 'tricker' if they're looking for flips and tricks — which is great progress for the sport."

Looking back, he said he's grateful for all that the martial arts have given him in preparation for this career. "The life lessons I learned and the physical ability [I developed] have shaped my life," he said. "I am truly thankful to the instructors and mentors I've had."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: *Floyd Burk is a San Diego-based 10th-degree black belt with more than 40 years of experience in the arts. He's also senior adviser to Independent Karate Schools of America (iksa.com).*

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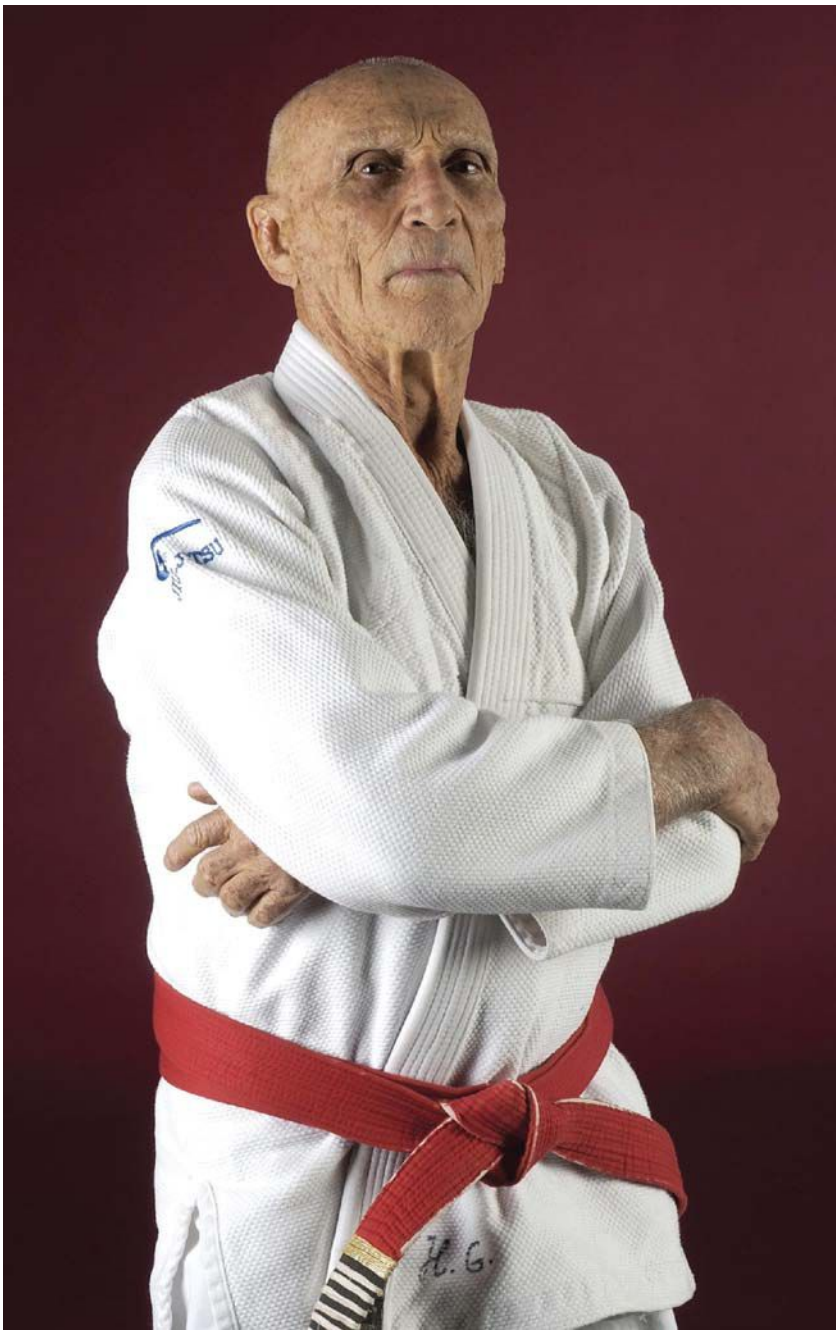


Musashi, Kano and Gracie — Martial Arts Challenge Matches

When asked about the aesthetics of a certain martial arts bout, Helio Gracie once replied gruffly, "A fight is a fight."

by Steven Abood

It wasn't that he didn't see beauty in the art of *jiu-jitsu.* He merely thought it was imperative to emphasize that fighting is a serious affair with potentially dire consequences for the loser and sometimes for his or her family.

Judging whether a martial art is good is very different from judging whether a dance or a painting is good. Dancing and painting possess various artistic qualities, while fighting is all about effectiveness.

IN THE MARTIAL ARTS, the critic of another person's style is seen as a negative force, and people's sensibilities are upset if anyone suggests that a particular art is not as good as another. There are several reasons for this dislike of criticism.

First, a group belief often develops when people engage in a shared endeavor — whether they're doctors, lawyers or martial arts teachers. That belief holds that all criticism within the group is negative, that everyone is equally praiseworthy and that everyone should play nicely together.

Second, many people see the martial arts solely as a vehicle for self-expression. Even in the face of a near lack of combative utility, they maintain that there are artistic and psychological benefits to their art. To them, whether a martial art works or not is beside the point.

Third, some people see martial arts only as martial sports and don't think self-defense is needed, relevant or possible in the modern world.

Finally, there are those who feel an obligation to not hurt another instructor's business or feelings by criticizing his style. Many jiu-jitsu instructors, for example, will not say anything negative about other schools for fear they won't be brought in to teach at those schools. Out of concerns that they'll lose money, they choose to remain silent.

Helio Gracie was not one of those people.

GRACIE BELIEVED that martial artists who claim to teach self-defense have obligations — to women who are training to avoid being raped, to children who are training to avoid being abducted, to adults who are training to avoid being cornered in a dark alley, to cops who are training to boost their chances of subduing violent suspects even when backup is miles away.

That's why in his younger years, Gracie challenged representatives from other martial arts schools in Brazil who were promoting themselves as self-defense teachers. It was his way of exposing potentially fraudulent practices. When a person was selling self-defense to the public and the public was getting something else, Gracie wasn't pleased.

In a way, Rorion Gracie followed in his father's footsteps when he co-founded the Ultimate Fighting Cham-

Photo by Rick Hustead

pionship in 1993. Rorion insisted that the bouts take place with no rules — to determine how well an art will work in a fight. Otherwise, Rorion believed, people could claim that a tactic or technique that wasn't permitted would have altered the outcome. The Gracies saw the UFC as a movement to prove the efficacy of various martial arts, even though the people who eventually acquired it opted to promote it as sports entertainment.

The Gracies weren't the first ones to use challenge matches to gauge effectiveness. In fact, challenges have a long tradition in the martial arts.

JAPAN SAW numerous challenge matches throughout its history. Some occurred on the battlefield when samurai from one army would call out samurai from the opposing army. Heads were collected to keep track of the outcomes.

Others occurred between individuals. For example, during the Tokugawa period (1603-1868), samurai such as Miyamoto Musashi would engage in *musha shugyo,* or warrior pilgrimages. That entailed traveling the country to test their martial skills against all comers. In this way, the efficacy of one sword style was tested against others, and the winners were subsequently propagated through martial arts schools and in private lessons to government officials.

Later, challenges without weapons became popular. Example: Jigoro Kano's *tenjinshinyo jujitsu* teacher Hachinosuke Fukuda erected a 6-foot-by-12-foot sign outside Asakusa Temple in Tokyo that stated, "If there is anyone who is a stronger jujitsu expert, I will withdraw this sign." The placard remains in place.

Kano himself took part in challenge matches involving members of the *totsuka* jujitsu school for the right to teach defensive tactics to the Tokyo police. And then there were the challenges that involved Mitsuyo Maeda, the martial artist who wound up teaching the Gracie family in Brazil.

OBVIOUSLY, CHALLENGE matches have served a valuable purpose in the history of the martial arts. Today, whenever you study a style that has repeatedly prevailed in such encounters, you know you're getting self-defense techniques that have been put to the test and come out on top.

● **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** *Steven Abood has a jiu-jitsu black belt from Relson Gracie, a judo black belt from Steven Alphabet, and instructor rank in jeet kune do and kali from Dan Inosanto.*

EMPOWERING WOMEN

One of the projects author Steven Abood is passionate about is getting more women into the martial arts. To that end, he teaches a course called Invincible Woman Self Defense at Florida International University. He recently launched a campaign to convince martial arts instructors to donate a lesson so the course can be made available for free through domestic-violence shelters. (Those instructors will be featured in a national video campaign.) ***iwproject.com***

Pursuing a Martial Arts Degree at Shanghai University of Sport Part 1: Chinese Wrestling

In spring 2013, I was accepted into the Ph.D. program at Shanghai University of Sport, the only institution in the world that offers a doctorate in martial arts. My major is wrestling, and my dissertation topic is a comparison of the traditional Chinese version and the modern Western way.

by Antonio Graceffo

One of the fringe benefits of my course of study is it gives me access to two departments at the university. I attend classes, as well as practice *san da* and traditional wrestling, in the Wushu Institute. At the same time, I hone my Greco-Roman wrestling in the Department of Olympic Sports.

To enter a Ph.D. program in China, a master's degree is required in addition to a number of exams. The program lasts four years. Year one is an intensive study of Chinese language; I had that waived because I'd already passed the Chinese-language proficiency exam. So I walked into year two, which combines studying with training. The following is a breakdown of what my experience has entailed so far.

THE TRADITIONAL Chinese wrestling team at SUS is composed of 12 male and eight female members divided into weight categories. They wear a heavy jacket that's similar to a judo *gi* except it's short sleeved. The belts — red or blue — do not denote rank; they're used in competition so it's easier for judges to distinguish the participants. In a match, the jacket and the belt can be grabbed.

While wrestling with some of the heavyweights, who can tip the scales at more than 210 pounds, I often feel like a baby seal getting eaten by a shark on Discovery Channel. Beginners have been known to get KO'd before they learned how to cope with the thrashing that's par for the course. One of the reasons Chinese wrestlers like to shake their opponent like a British nanny is it sloshes the brain around inside the skull, causing momentary disorientation. It also helps weaken the opponent's grip and disrupt his balance.

No matter the goal, it's a barrel of fun — even more so when you consider that in a match, there's a rule that if you're touching your opponent, you must move him. That leads to wrestlers tossing each other around with no apparent purpose so they can avoid penalties in competition without having to think about it.

CHINESE THROWS are interesting. When I started training in the art, I thought it was similar to Greco-Roman wrestling with lots of upper-body-strength moves. But once I learned the ropes, I realized that the upper body is used for control while most of the strength needed for throwing comes from the legs.

Leg hooking is an integral part of Chinese wrestling. In fact, it's one of the basic kung fu exercises that wrestlers study in the early stages of training. Once I learned to leg-hook, my teachers had me practicing the skill hundreds of times a day to make my legs strong. Later, the technique became my secret weapon: No matter what throw I was going for, if I couldn't quite get my opponent down, I'd simply leg-hook him.

Sometimes young wrestlers get into leg-hook duels to determine who's more macho. They leg-hook each other and fight it out to see who goes down first. Whenever I watch older wrestlers — men in their 50s and 60s — practicing in the parks, I never see them get suckered into such primitive battles of strength. Instead, they rely on technique to take down their opponents with ease.

Photo Courtesy of Antonio Graceffo

The "real" wrestling techniques those experienced gents tend to favor often involve taking an opponent's balance in three directions. For example, the wrestler grabs the other guy's jacket with one hand on his sleeve and the other on the opposite lapel. The hand on the sleeve lifts his body, while the hand on the lapel pushes him back. At the same time, the wrestler's foot trips him. That moves the opponent up, back and down.

BECAUSE THE PIN isn't recognized in Chinese wrestling, bouts are scored on points. A clean throw is worth two points. A throw in which the opponent completes a 180-degree flip in midair is worth three. If you throw your foe and wind up going to the mat together, you get only one point.

A fall is scored when any part of the body except the feet touches the mat. This means that if you can force your opponent's knee to the floor, you score. It also means that you can't execute sacrifice throws in which you hit the ground first. Additionally, you can't use throws in which your knee touches the ground — unless you want to give up points.

You can obtain points for throwing your opponent out of the wrestling circle, but only if he's not touching you when he goes out. If he's still holding your arm, for example, no points are awarded. At the end of the time limit, usually two two-minute rounds, the points are tallied. Whoever has the most points wins.

There are other regulations. Once you lock up with your opponent or begin a throw, you have only three to five seconds to complete it. Otherwise, the referee will separate you. The art gained its nickname "fast wrestling" because it forces you to act quickly.

Interestingly, my Ph.D. adviser refers to Western wrestling as "slow wrestling" because you can take as much time as you need to complete a throw. When he found out you can clinch for 30 seconds or longer in MMA events, he pretty much gave up on the whole Western hemisphere.

From the experience I gained in Beijing and Shanghai, I've concluded that referees in Chinese wrestling often will allow any legal technique that results in a throw even if it's not a traditional one. For example, I use a lot of body-lock or body-lock-and-lift throws and get away with it. However, I can't swear that such nonstandard techniques are allowed everywhere. Some masters are very traditional, and I can imagine them assessing a foul if you use a Greco or freestyle throw.

AS A MARTIAL ARTIST who plans to return to MMA competition, I appreciate Chinese wrestling because the upper-body-control throws are useful for fighting out of the clinch. Even better, the art uses high single- and double-leg takedowns, which I find more effective than shooting in low on my knees. These two techniques are excellent for augmenting san da leg-catch or kick-catch throws, as well.

(To be continued.)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: *Antonio Graceffo's book Warrior Odyssey is available at amazon.com*

The Business of Tournament Promotion

Among the various enterprises martial artists use to financially capitalize on their expertise, perhaps the most ubiquitous is the tournament.

by Mark Jacobs

It's easy money, right? Just find a high-school gym that can handle a few hundred competitors and spectators, send a bunch of fliers to local *dojo,* pass out some cheap trophies at the end of the day and then count your profits. Nice and simple … or is it?

"It takes an awful lot of time and effort to put together a tournament," said Don Rodrigues, who runs the Ocean State Grand Nationals, one of the largest karate competitions in the United States. "The day after I finish my tournament, I'm already working on the one for next year. You have to find a date that doesn't conflict with anything, find a suitable venue, get insurance and quality trophies, and do the advertising."

AT THE TOP of Rodrigues' to-do list is finding a good date to hold the event. Ideally, it shouldn't conflict with any nearby tournaments. Even holding yours the weekend after another event isn't ideal because people may be hesitant to go to tournaments on back-to-back weekends. If possible, make sure there are no other local shindigs that might siphon off interest — such as fairs, festivals and high-school football games.

Of course, you'll need to find a venue that's big enough but still affordable. Note that while most martial arts schools carry an insurance policy that will allow for a rider for tournament coverage, some venues may require additional insurance — incurring additional expense. Consequently, it's crucial to get started early so you'll have time to put out the word far enough in advance for people to have time to make plans to attend.

Alan Goldberg is a master of getting things done early. He runs The Ultimate Destination for All Martial Arts in Atlantic City, New Jersey, a festival that includes banquets, seminars, a trade show and three tournaments that attract 7,000 visitors.

It takes 90,000 pieces of advertising to make that happen, Goldberg said. "I send out fliers and postcards. I also have the largest email list in the world. I go in every direction — on the Internet, in magazines, everywhere."

BOTH GOLDBERG and Rodrigues caution first-timers not to overextend themselves. When it comes to martial arts competitions, bigger isn't necessarily better, they said. This is particularly true for anyone promoting a grappling contest. Why? Because the logistics can make holding a large open tournament, as opposed to a small in-house event, all but impossible.

"It has to do with the economics and human resources available," said Texas-based martial arts instructor Syed Ahmed. "With a big grappling tournament, you have to do everything you'd do for a large karate tournament, but you have the added function of setting up a huge number of mats. Just transporting them to the arena costs a pretty penny. Then you need a whole crew to set them up.

"That's why most of the large grappling events you see are actually staged by companies like NAGA, who will roll into town and set up the tournament themselves."

With his Bushi Ban International organization, which spans 11 schools in the United States, Ahmed is one of the few

Photo by Arztsamui/Shutterstock.com

independent promoters capable of holding a sizable open grappling event on his own. The support he gets from his vast student body makes this feasible.

Attempting to promote any martial arts tournament without a school to provide support is almost inconceivable. In addition to serving as competitors, that student base — and, ideally, some family members — will be able to help set up the venue, work as scorekeepers and timekeepers, and clean up at the end of the day.

"You absolutely have to have a good staff [and volunteers] to make sure the tournament runs efficiently," Rodrigues said. "I've actually gone to tournaments where they forgot to bring pencils for the scorekeepers. You need people you can trust to take care of these things."

One option Rodrigues recommends to improve efficiency is joining an organization with a track record in tournament promotion. Two such groups are the Karate Referees Association of New England and the Amateur Organization of Karate. Representatives can give advice on how to stage an event, where to find sponsors and how to get insurance, as well as provide a pool of potential competitors and officials.

One key component of that last item is reciprocation: School A supports events staged by School B, and in return, School B supports tournaments put on by School A.

"I always tell people interested in promoting a tournament that if you're not willing to give up 20 weekends a year going to other tournaments, don't think about promoting one of your own," Rodrigues said.

If all this sounds like a lot of effort, it is.

"Even for a small event, you have to put in a huge number of hours on preplanning," Goldberg said. "If you don't and you think it will succeed, you're fooling yourself."

ALTHOUGH ORGANIZING a tournament can bring in a nice supplemental income for a martial arts instructor, you shouldn't make plans to get rich.

To hold an event, you'll need to lay out money upfront. Rodrigues said $12,000 is a reasonable amount for a small tournament that will attract 200 competitors. If you charge those competitors $50 apiece and each brings one spectator, whom you charge $10 for admission, you'll come close to breaking even.

To generate a profit, you'll need to consider alternative income sources. They include food concessions, vendors (martial arts equipment companies that pay to set up a booth) and sponsors (companies that pay to have their name shown at the venue or in the program). Do everything right, and you may end up with a few thousand bucks at the end of the day.

Fortunately, organizing tournaments offers other benefits.

"Tournaments provide an important service in the martial arts community by allowing students to test their skills and improve," Ahmed said. "A good, well-run tournament can also help grow the industry and satisfy the needs of a certain group of martial artists.

"There's nothing wrong with also profiting from that as long as you're staging a quality event."

Supremacy of the Sword as Reflected in Japanese Culture

In English, our slang expressions and idioms reflect the role firearms have played in our history. No doubt you've heard many of them: "He's firing with both barrels," "You should stick to your guns," and so on.

by Dave Lowry

In Japan, the sword was the weapon that dominated. Whether you were a samurai who carried two swords or a member of another class who wore a single long or short sword, the blade played an enormous role in your culture. As a result, the Japanese language absorbed a number of idioms — some of them just as dated as ours related to firearms — that refer to the sword. These idioms also illustrate the deep influence of the martial arts in Japan.

FOR EXAMPLE, if you don't get along with someone, it's a case of *sori ga awanai. Sori* is the curvature of the sword. A scabbard must be custom-crafted so it matches that curve perfectly. *Awanai* means "doesn't match." So the sword and the scabbard don't match.

A thin metal plate that fits in front of and behind the hand guard of a sword is called a *seppa.* "Spacer" might be a good translation. To be *seppa tsumaru* is to be in a difficult, drastic situation. It means the spacer is stuck — it's preventing the sword from being drawn, a potentially dangerous condition if a fight is imminent.

Nukisashi naranu is a related expression. It refers to being unable either to draw or resheathe your sword. In other words, you're completely frustrated.

MANY JAPANESE who use these idioms have no idea what they originally meant, just as Americans who say that something was done "lock, stock and barrel" might not be conscious of the original meaning (parts of a flintlock rifle). Few Japanese may know, for example, that one term for the central street in a town, *menuki dori,* came from another part of the sword's furniture.

A *menuki* is a small, molded ornament that fits into the hilt of the sword, wedged under the silk wrapping. It helps keep the wrapping tight and allows the swordsman to get a firm grip on the weapon. As such, it's vital to keeping the hilt and the blade together. So the "menuki street" — *dori* is Japanese for "street" — means the central element that keeps the town together.

Futokoro-gatana is another old term, one that refers to the small dagger that was concealed in the folds of the kimono. Women often carried them. The word has come to mean someone who's secretly advising someone else — in other words, a person who can be depended on behind the scenes.

TO ENGAGE in heavy combat, whether on the battlefield or in business, is sometimes called *shinogi wo kezuru. Kezuru* means "to shave." The *shinogi* is the ridgeline that runs the length of the Japanese sword. If you've been in strenuous combat, the ridge of your sword will have been scraped.

Want a great insult? Tell someone he's *katana no sabi* — "a sword's rust." It means he's so insignificant that it wouldn't be worth risking getting blood on your *katana* to kill him because that might lead to rust on the steel.

Another ancient insult is used to describe a person who's lost his skills: *Mukashi tsurugi, ima no usuba.* "He was once a sword; now he's a vegetable chopper."

Remember, though, that *katana no kizu wa naoseru ga kotoba no kizu wa naosenai.* Sword wounds can heal, but wounds inflicted by words may not.

TO RECONCILE after a fight or disagreement can be expressed as *moto no saya ni osamaru. Osamaru* is "to settle" or "to restore." *Moto no saya* is "to return to the scabbard." So returning the sword to its original place means making things right and coming to an accommodation.

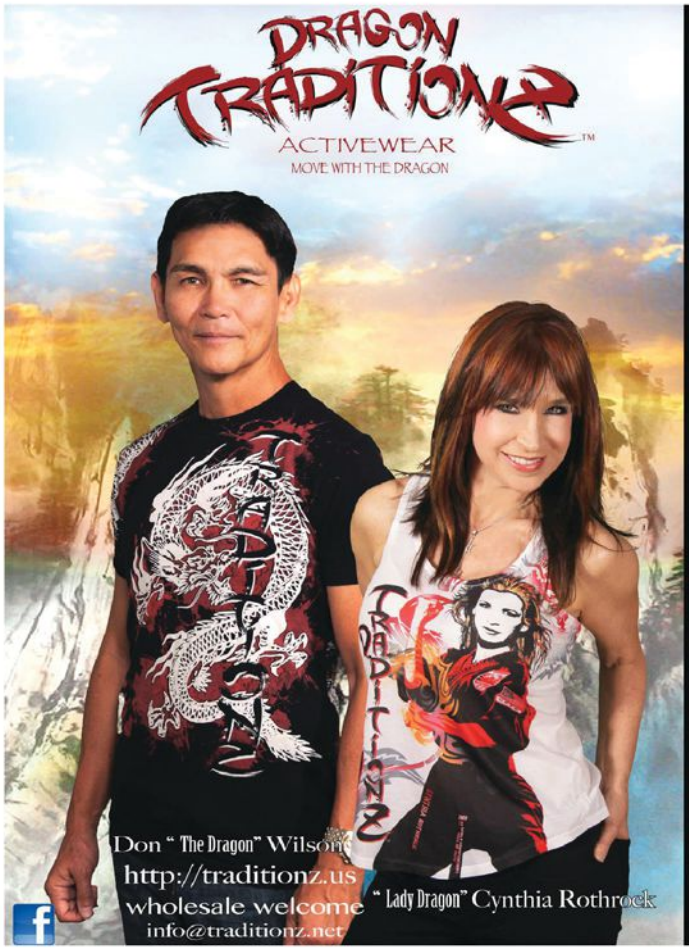
The *saya* or scabbard also figures in the expression "to hit the saya," or *saya ate.* In the days of the samurai, you had to be very careful about moving in a crowd because you didn't want your scabbard to smack against that of another warrior. It was a serious insult, a challenge of sorts. Swordsmen who wanted to test their skills would deliberately move so it appeared that another person had intentionally hit their scabbard. That gave them the right to draw their weapon and begin a fight. So saya ate is a way of saying that a person is deliberately picking a quarrel or fighting over something trivial.

"TO CUT to the chase" can be expressed in Japanese as *tanto chokunyu.* It means "to charge straight ahead with a short sword." It's a way of saying you're committed, you want to get straight to the matter at hand.

Tsuba zeriai is familiar to fans of Japanese period dramas. A pair of samurai are locked in combat, the hand guards of their swords touching, each pushing and struggling within inches of the other's face. It looks very dramatic, but in reality, it rarely happened. That close, someone would either use the hilt to smash his opponent's head, or drop his sword and start grappling. Tsuba zeriai, however, occurs frequently in *kendo* bouts, in which neither the sharp sword edge nor the possibility of grappling is a factor. The expression means "to be fighting in a determined way, furiously, with complete intent."

IF YOU FEEL inclined to unleash any of the aforementioned idioms on an unsuspecting Japanese person, remember that many of the expressions are dated. Younger Japanese people are likely to look at you the way an American kid would if you suddenly started speaking Shakespearean English.

"To cut to the chase" can be expressed in Japanese as *tanto chokunyu.* It means "to charge straight ahead with a short sword." It's a way of saying you're committed, you want to get straight to the matter at hand.



Beat Cancer

What could be worse than getting a call from your doctor announcing that your prostate biopsy shows two cancerous spots? Getting that call on December 23. Merry Christmas.

by Loren W. Christensen

Three months earlier, I couldn't have told you what a prostate was. I knew that most older males have issues — although younger ones can, too — but I hadn't given it much thought. I was in good shape, ate healthily, didn't smoke and didn't use drugs. If prostate cancer wanted a victim, surely it would zap my beer-guzzling, burger-gnawing, cigarette-sucking neighbor.

Nope. It picked me.

I'll spare you the decision-making my family and I went through as to which surgery to have. Instead, I'll explain how I used the martial arts to prepare for the operation and recover afterward.

ALTHOUGH I WAS FIT, the doctor said the procedure would go easier if I dropped 10 to 20 pounds. He either didn't factor in or didn't care that I was packing a lot of muscle. He wanted my weight down.

I've been lifting weights since I was 13 and training in the martial arts — karate, *jujitsu* and *arnis* — for 50 years, so I knew I couldn't drop 20 pounds in eight weeks without it being mostly muscle. Ten maybe.

I was weight-training three days a week and practicing martial arts three days. They were already hard sessions, so the best way for me to drop weight was to reduce calories and add short workouts throughout the day.

Regarding calories, I figured the formula was simple: Eat less than you burn. A friend, a former football player who knew about cutting weight, said, "Dropping pounds means you eat less of the foods you like."

The first three days were the hardest. By the fourth, I wasn't as hungry and was feeling pretty good. A week later, I was down 2 pounds, and a week after that, 5.

I added a ton of highly seasoned veggies, ate slowly to appreciate the flavors and kept busy so as not to be preoccupied with food.

The fourth week was easier. I was a poster boy for eating right and I'd lost 2 more pounds. And so it went.

MY TRAINING SCHEDULE before cutting weight was as follows:

- Monday: martial arts for 90 minutes
- Tuesday: weights (chest and back)
- Wednesday: martial arts for 90 minutes, weightless squats
- Thursday: weights (shoulders)
- Friday: martial arts for 45 minutes
- Saturday: weights (arms), weightless squats
- Sunday: rest

I kept this schedule and added two exercises. First was walking. After years of hard-core martial arts training, walking seemed as rousing as playing a game of croquet, but it encourages weight loss and bone strengthening, and it prevents heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure.

Because I was training hard with weights and martial arts, I walked only 30 minutes a day, but I kept my pace fast to burn calories.

The second thing I added was one-minute workouts. Research has shown that people need to move every 20 minutes, even if they train in the evening, to prevent a variety of health problems. Little things can help — like walking to the drinking fountain and standing while on the phone.

To augment that, I did 60-second rounds of martial arts throughout the day. For example, I would spar with an imaginary opponent, practice combinations, throw kicks up and down a hallway, and block and counter while getting up from a chair.

Because there was no warm-up, my one-minute workouts were done at medium speed and with low kicks. I aimed for 10 sessions a day but sometimes did 20. Occasionally, I did two- and three-minute sessions.

While my intent was to burn a few extra calories, I found that my techniques improved, too. There were two reasons for this:

First, I performed more reps of basic moves than before I got sick. Second,

because of my reduced calorie intake and extra exercise, I was training fatigued, so I had to focus on precision. The late Joe Lewis would deliberately exhaust himself before sparring so he was forced to concentrate on strategy and form.

By the time my surgery rolled around, I had dropped 19 pounds — some of it muscle — and was in great shape. I peaked on April 13 and had the surgery on April 14. On April 15, my newly improved fitness evaporated. Ffffffft, just like that.

IF LOSING ALL I'd gained in 24 hours wasn't bad enough, the doctor said I couldn't do anything physical for eight weeks other than walk. "You mean eight days?" I choked, since I'd never gone longer than five days without training.

"Weeks," he said. "Damage the work I did inside you, and it'll be eight months."

As it turned out, I could move only like a newborn fawn anyway. The pain was in the stratosphere, but the creep factor from having two drain catheters coming out of me and six bleeding incision sites in my belly was higher. By day three, however, I slow-walked 100 yards down the block — and barely wobbled back. I did it again the next day, and by day four, I was up to a perspiring 200 yards. Each day and each passing week, I increased the distance toward a goal of walking 45 minutes a day. By week four, I'd made it.

I was feeling improved by week five, so I figured I could do a few resistance exercises. After training for many decades with weights and martial arts, I knew I could keep my core relaxed and uninvolved. My "resistance" consisted of walking around my training area while curling an 8-pound club. I did the same thing with shoulder laterals and triceps kickbacks.

PRIOR TO THE SURGERY, I showed the doctor a couple of karate moves, and he blared, "Absolutely no." My only option was to do mental martial arts workouts. Usually, I practiced mental rehearsal in my chair or on a meditation cushion. Now I was doing it in my training area.

You don't have to go through a miserable surgery or be injured to do mental workouts. You can do them whenever you want a day off from training or need extra practice but don't want to change clothes or get sweaty.

One example of what I did is the roundhouse kick. I'd stand in front of a heavy bag and, because I had to stand straight-legged, *mentally* assume a bent-leg stance. Then I'd pivot my lead foot slightly to the outside, slowly lift my rear foot about 3 inches and stop. In my mind, I'd whip my rear leg into the bag, set it down in front and kick with my other leg. I usually did 50 reps per leg.

Another example is the eye gouge–cross punch combination. I'd look at BOB's eyes and slowly extend my lead hand about 12 inches. Mentally, though, I'd see and feel my fingers cram into his eye sockets, hear his scream and see his anguished face. Then I'd slowly extend a cross punch a few inches, although mentally I could see, feel and hear my fist slam into his solar plexus. I did 50 reps on each side.

AT SEVEN WEEKS, I started walking while throwing relaxed but fully extended hand techniques and low front kicks, both without hip torque and with a relaxed core. I couldn't do many, but each day, I added more. At week eight, the doctor said I could resume training but advised me to go s-l-o-w-l-y.

It was strange at first because my martial arts knowledge and my physical response weren't in sync. But as I had done in the previous four months, I drew on the cornerstones of the martial arts — perseverance, indomitable spirit, goal setting and internal strength — to beat the pain.

The result: I'm on the path back.

● **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** *A martial artist since 1965, Loren W. Christensen has written more than 50 books, one of which is Mental Rehearsal for Warriors. lwcbooks.com*

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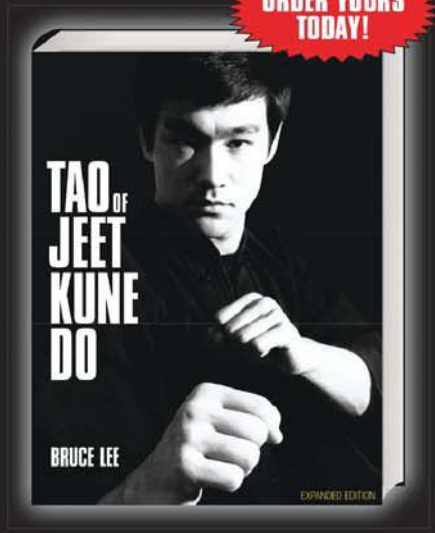

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Strength Without Sacrificing Speed and Flexibility

by Ian Lauer, CSCS

Q: ***"I want to get stronger, but I avoid weightlifting because I've always heard it makes you slow and reduces flexibility. Is this true?"***

A: Old-school weightlifting is one of the best ways to build strength. Weight workouts are also a tried-and-true method for improving your personal power output. There are, however, a few secrets to success you may not know. Once you master them, you'll drastically improve your strength without sacrificing other attributes you need for martial arts proficiency.

SECRET NO. 1 — BALANCE At first glance, the word "balance" probably makes you think about standing on one foot for an extended period, but in this case, I'm referring to muscular balance. When it comes to movement, the human body is essentially a series of levers. It follows that a martial art is an expression of the movement of levers through space. They're powered, of course, by the contraction and relaxation of muscles. It's important to note that muscles don't push; they only contract or relax, which is why muscular balance is so important.

Consider the arm as an example. The main muscle groups involved in movement at the elbow are the biceps and triceps. To flex your arm, you contract your biceps and relax your triceps. The opposite holds for an arm extension. The same basic principle applies across the body.

So what does this mean for martial artists? You need to choose your exercises intelligently so they promote muscular balance. Pushing exercises (bench press, shoulder press and so on) must be countered by pulling exercises (barbell row, lat pulldown, etc.).

Balance also pertains to different parts of the body. For example, as you work to develop your upper body, don't neglect your lower body.

This is not to say that you have to work opposing groups or all muscle groups on the same day. Rather, you need to devote roughly equal attention to each body part throughout the week.

Martial artists often fear that weight training will make them bulky and slow. Speaking from years of experience with weights, I can tell you that muscle is not that easy to put on. It takes years to add substantial amounts of mass. You're in no danger of waking up huge!

Furthermore, if at any time you feel like you've gained too much muscle, you can simply stop lifting. The added mass will subside over time. Always remember that it's what you put in your mouth, more so than what you put on the barbell, that affects how much mass gets added to your body.

SECRET NO. 2 — FLEXIBILITY If you lose it, you'll experience reduced range of motion and decreased speed. For that reason, you're justified in being concerned. The good news is this is very easy to combat. Just take a little time every day to warm up your muscles and stretch. It will pay huge dividends in the flexibility department.

You probably knew that already, but did you know that, done right, weight training can actually improve flexibility? When you work through a full range of motion with a weight, you put your muscles in a fully stretched position during the relaxation phase. In essence, each set of an exercise is a series of short stretches followed by contractions. As long as you maintain proper form and work through the full range of motion, it can be very beneficial.

When you couple standard lengthening stretches with this pre-stretched pump condition of the fascia, you're likely to see flexibility gains beyond what's possible with stretching alone.

Another factor to consider is the benefit of stretching your muscles postworkout. When you lift, your muscle tissue swells temporarily. This is known as a "pump" in gym vernacular. At this time, the fascia — the connective tissue that encases muscle fibers and plays an important role in overall flexibility — is already stretched beyond its normal relaxed capacity. It's not unlike adding air to a balloon. As the air goes in, the balloon stretches. As you pump up your muscle by lifting weights, the fascia stretches. When you couple standard lengthening stretches with this pre-stretched pump condition of the fascia, you're likely to see flexibility gains beyond what's possible with stretching alone.

SECRET NO. 3 — RELAXATION You've probably had martial arts instructors tell you thousands of times to stay relaxed until the moment before contact to improve your speed and power. This is good advice. If it makes you worry that more muscle will result in increased tension and consequently slower movement, allow me to allay your fears.

The truth is that increased muscle and strength *can* lead to increased tension, but it doesn't have to. The way to avoid unnecessary tension is to focus on relaxation.

Muscle relaxation derives from the mind-muscle connection, self-confidence and breathing. It's not dependent on the size of the muscle. Weight training boosts the mind-muscle connection with each repetition. Increases in strength lead to increased self-confidence, which helps you relax because you know the strength will be there when you need it. By combining these factors with proper breathing to enhance relaxation, you enjoy maximum power.

STILL NOT SOLD on weight training? Take a moment to look outside the *dojo* at professional athletes on the football field, on the basketball court or on the ice. These guys are bigger and stronger than ever. Despite the extra muscle, they're faster than they've ever been. How have they gotten these results? Through aggressive strength-and-conditioning programs that use old-school weight training.

It can do the same for you.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: *Ian Lauer is a certified strength-and-conditioning specialist and a first-degree black belt in karate. He's currently studying American kenpo. ianlauer.com*

BRUCE LEE

LEGACY LIVES ON!

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Shannon Lee Talks About New Projects Involving Her Famous Father and Reveals Why She's Devoted Her Life to Preserving His Message

INTERVIEW BY ROBERT W. YOUNG

"Bruce Lee" is a registered trademark of Bruce Lee Enterprises LLC. The Bruce Lee name, image and likeness are intellectual property of Bruce Lee Enterprises LLC. Photos © Bruce Lee Enterprises.

Your father's name has been in the news a lot recently. Probably the biggest story came in late March, when Brett Ratner, director of the Rush Hour movies, talked about a possible plan to remake Enter the Dragon.

Actually, we're not involved in that. Warner Bros. owns *Enter the Dragon,* and certainly they can remake it if they'd like to. I do think it would be silly to remake that movie because the thing that made it such a smash was Bruce Lee. If you take him out of it, you basically have a James Bondian plot with some person doing what I'm sure would be interesting and fun action sequences, but I don't know that it's possible to make that into a classic — not without Bruce Lee in it.

When The Green Hornet was made into a feature film in 2011 and Jay Chou was selected to portray Kato, fans found themselves comparing him with your father, and in the eyes of most, Chou was seen as "unworthy." It would seem that any actor or martial artist chosen to reprise Bruce Lee's character in Enter the Dragon would be fighting an impossible battle.

I think so, too. The thing I always say about my father is the reason he was so compelling to watch on-screen and his legacy exists so boldly and vibrantly today is because of *him.* He was such a self-cultivated, authentic, powerful presence, and he expressed that in his every move, every word and every deed. He really walked the walk. That person you see in *Enter the Dragon* was that person in real life. I just don't think that can be replicated.

So you're saying that your father is an icon not just because of his martial arts movies. It's because of the man behind them, his philosophies, his knowledge of filmmaking and so on.

Definitely. He choreographed all the scenes in *Enter the Dragon,* and he added so much of the philosophical dialogue that was in the movie. All the memorable scenes — the finger pointing at the moon, the art of fighting without fighting — it all came from him. And then there's his own physicality and skill. I just don't know that it can be replicated ... or that anyone should try. (laughs)

What can you tell us about Warrior and Justin Lin, the man behind Fast & Furious 6, Fast Five and Fast & Furious?

We have a deal with Cinemax. We just closed our deal with Jonathan Tropper to write it and Justin Lin — he's my partner on the project — to direct the pilot. We're getting ready to work on the script with Jonathan. By the end of the year, we hope to start filming. I'm producing and consulting — helping put a "Bruce Lee touch" on all of it.

It must be exciting for you personally to be involved in a crime drama based on your father's notes.

So exciting! I have to credit Justin. I've met with him on several occasions, and he's always genuine. Of course I'd had all my father's notes and writings on this particular project for years and years, but Justin provided the impetus to make us say, "Let's do it the way Bruce Lee would have wanted." He cares a lot about the project. The hope is that it will be this brilliant piece of entertainment, and we're doing our best to make that happen.

The next thing that's putting Bruce Lee in the news is the 75th anniversary of his birth, which is coming on November 27. What's in the works?

We've actually been celebrating my father's birthday all year, but there are also things coming up. On our social media outlets — Facebook, primarily, but also Twitter and Instagram — we're doing 75 special posts in honor of the 75th birthday. They consist of other people's remembrances, thoughts and quotes about my father. We'll be doing some video interviews with people who knew him, as well.

We're doing lots of specials and giveaways — for example, 75 limited-edition items that are available through our store. We're doing giveaways of Bruce and Brandon prints because it's also my brother's 50th birthday celebration. We recently started Brandon's official Facebook page.

On October 24, the Bruce Lee Foundation will hold the Bruce Lee Festival in Las Vegas. It's going to be a big celebration downtown with screenings, speakers, music and other events. We'll have more information in a month or so.

That festival will kick off an online auction that flows into November, which is my father's birth month. In November, we're also doing an exhibit and fundraiser in Hong Kong. That's all for the 75th. There are other things happening, too.

What's happening with the Bruce Lee exhibit at the museum in Seattle?

Over the past few years, the foundation has worked with different museums to create exhibits. For example, we have an exhibit at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum that will be up for five years. And we have an exhibit in Seattle at the Wing Luke Museum, which will be up for another three years.

Photo Courtesy of Wing Luke Museum

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We're in communication with a group in Seattle to work out all the details for our own space. In the next eight to nine months, we'll be doing the design and feasibility work, and then I hope we'll be able to present something shortly thereafter. We're also creating an online presence for the museum so people can get access to some of the collections, virtually if not physically quite yet.

Regarding the museum in Hong Kong: Do you think China is becoming more interested in Bruce Lee and his legacy, or has it always been that way?

I think in Hong Kong, it has always been that way. When it comes to Greater China, it seems that now people want to do more with the Bruce Lee name. It's an interesting dynamic because my father's name is very well-known in China, but a lot of the younger generation doesn't know much about him. They haven't seen the films, and they don't know the depths of his legacy, the inspiration of his message or the way he lived his life. I'm trying to find a way to educate them. A lot of people just want to use the name to create products or businesses, but we feel there has to be more to it than that. We try to make sure people understand what the message is.

Tommy Gong, author of Bruce Lee: The Evolution of a Martial Artist, recently dropped by our office and mentioned the same thing — that you're working hard to spread knowledge of your father's philosophies.

This is why I'm involved in the business, honestly. If my father had

made a handful of kick-ass movies in the '70s and there was an opportunity to exploit that by putting photos on T-shirts to make money — I wouldn't be interested in putting all my energy into that.

The thing I want to put my energy toward is the philosophy. So much value comes from being around that and trying to live my life in a better way, the self-actualization and self-cultivation, who I am and what walking my own path means. It's inspirational, especially the way my father overcame obstacles and worked so hard and believed in himself.

It's a message worth putting out there. It resonates with so many people from different walks of life. You don't have to be a martial artist to get value from it. The message is universal: using no way as way, having no limitation as limitation. Keeping that alive, inspiring people and putting out something positive in the world is what really appeals to me.

Do you think the philosophies your father is known for grew out of his martial arts practice, or were they conceived by him to be bigger than the martial arts?

That's a good question. I would say the philosophies grew out of his martial arts practice. He started when he was 13, which is quite young. He really tried to embody what he learned from Yip Man. My father would write about suddenly understanding something such as what it means to be like water.

I think he had a receptive mind from the beginning and was always very curious. He liked to push the envelope and test things. When the martial arts and the philosophies started making their way into his universe, he was the perfect vessel for it. He turned it into a personal quest and started reading Eastern and Western philosophy books and using himself as a life experiment.

What's the best resource for people who are interested in Bruce Lee's philosophies?

Obviously, *Tao of Jeet Kune Do* is a great resource. It's not just a martial arts book. I know people who are not martial artists who tell me how much they've gotten out of it because

Shannon Lee Photo Courtesy of Featureflash/Shutterstock.com

it's balanced between technique and philosophy. And it's his thoughts from cover to cover.

That little book *Bruce Lee: Wisdom for the Way* is a wonderful primer, if you will, because it's so easy to take in with just a quote and an image per page. You can flip to a page and pick up a pearl of wisdom for the day. It's a nice entry path into his philosophy.

Of course there are other books with quotes, but I always think of these two as great gateway books.

On the occasion of the 75th celebration of his birthday, what do you think your father would be doing now? Would he be a writer, a philosopher, a moviemaker, a martial arts instructor, an MMA fan?

I think he'd be one hell of a 75-year-old! (laughs) We'd probably have YouTube videos of him doing impressive things at 75. He was a person who was extremely passionate about life, so I think he'd be engaged in a lot of things while still giving himself opportunities to express himself on any subject, whether it was filmmaking, being a fight fan or teaching.

But because his journey was one of introspection and ultimately expression of that, I believe that he would have continued to be a teacher. He had a real desire to help people and to find others who were interested in going on a journey and go through the process with them. He wanted people to search inside themselves for their own path. Maybe not just in martial arts, maybe in the field of personal cultivation, but I know he would have been a teacher.

With all this talk about your father's focus on philosophy, do you think that people who regard him only as a martial arts technician are looking at the finger and missing the moon?

(laughs) I guess it depends on why they're looking. If you're working on your punching and you're looking at his techniques, there's obviously good information in that. But he was concerned about the physical, the mental *and* the spiritual aspects of things. So if people are only looking at the physical, they're missing a lot of really good things. But they're on their own journey ...

... And they might come around to look at the bigger picture later?

That's right. However you find Bruce Lee — whether it's through martial arts, through movies or through a cool T-shirt — once he's in your consciousness, you can't help but go to the next place.

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Bruce Lee's Fighting Method: The Complete Edition	*paper and e-book*
Bruce Lee: The Evolution of a Martial Artist	*paper and e-book*
Bruce Lee's Fighting Method: Basic Training	*DVD*
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5 GATES OF JEET KUNE DO

TECHNIQUES FOR STOPPING ANY PUNCH AND EXECUTING AN IMMEDIATE FIGHT-ENDING COUNTER

BY RICHARD BUSTILLO | PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERT REIFF

I received my first exposure to the four gates of *wing chun* kung fu while studying *jeet kune do* under Bruce Lee and Dan Inosanto in the late 1960s. They taught me that the gates represent a method for defending against circular strikes such as the hook punch. There are four gates because of where such strikes can originate: the high-right quadrant, the high-left quadrant, the low-right quadrant and the low-left quadrant.

Wing chun also includes straight punches and defenses against them, but those techniques aren't part of the four-gates method. After having trained extensively in boxing and devoted much of my life to Lee's jeet kune do, I opted to add a fifth gate. It applies to defense against a straight rear-hand punch and a straight lead-hand jab. When studied together, these five defensive methods, which I call the five gates of jeet kune do,

FROM WING CHUN TO JKD

Even though Bruce Lee cut his teeth in *wu*-style *tai chi* under the tutelage of his father, he didn't begin serious training until, at age 13, he enrolled in Yip Man's school. His sole purpose was to acquire the skills needed to survive the street fights that ruled Hong Kong's back alleys and rooftops.

Lee learned all three classical forms: *si lum tao's* "little idea form," *chum kil's* "seeking the bridge" and *bil jee's* "shooting fingers" from Yip and his senior students. To that base he added *chi sao*, or sticking hands, and 60 of the 108 movements designed for the wooden dummy.

Wing chun was the only formal training Lee received. The ideas of economy of motion, simultaneous block and hit, centerline theory, interception, constant forward pressure and sensitivity must have struck a chord with him because they became the core of JKD.

— Harinder Singh

▶ The opponent (left), in a right lead, is about to attack Richard Bustillo with a straight left cross (1). When the man punches, Bustillo simultaneously parries the blow with his left hand and punches with his right (2). Note how the response puts Bustillo's left hand in position for his next strike: a left hammerfist to the jaw that's executed while he draws his right arm back in preparation for his follow-up (3). If needed, Bustillo can use the backward motion of his right arm to yank the man off-balance. Bustillo continues with a right hook punch to the side or back of the head, which causes the man to fall forward (4). He capitalizes on the opponent's downward motion by twisting clockwise and driving his left knee up and into the man's solar plexus (5). Bustillo then steps back and finishes with a low inside-leg kick (6).

▶ Standing in a right lead, the attacker (left) throws a body punch that comes from Richard Bustillo's low-left quadrant (1). Bustillo blocks the weapon with his left forearm and simultaneously effects a right punch to the face (2). Note how he twists his body slightly to his left to set up his next move, which entails turning to the right. Bustillo slams a left punch into the man's ribs (3) and follows up with a right hook to the jaw (4). The jeet kune do stylist finishes the same way — with a left knee to the abdomen (5) and a low kick to the leg (6).

constitute an essential component of self-defense.

Bruce Lee taught us the importance of being simple, direct and practical in our martial arts training and fighting, and that concept also applies to the five gates. Just because they're defensive in nature, they should not be considered passive. In fact, nothing in the five-gates method should be viewed as passive blocking. A superior defense consists of a block effected with one hand (or foot) executed simultaneously with a strike from the other hand (or foot).

In my comments, I'm not trying to teach a comprehensive lesson on the five gates of jeet kune do or to convey a complete picture. Rather, my intention is to show a few examples of what I've found to be effective — to indicate what's possible when you use this fighting method.

The combinations I demonstrate should take a fraction of a second to do, with the exact duration depending on the movements themselves. It's up to you to grasp the full scope of the techniques, to choose what to take and, if appropriate, what to adapt. The one central principle you should always apply is physical efficiency of speed and power.

For more information, visit richardbustillo.com or imbacademy.com.

▶ The opponent (right) assumes a right lead (1). When he punches from the high-left quadrant, Richard Bustillo parries the blow with his left arm and simultaneously punches with his right (2). He follows up with a strike that uses the blade of his left hand to hit the back of the neck (3). Bustillo continues with a right hook to the jaw (4). Now at inside range, Bustillo executes a left knee strike to the torso (5). He steps back with his left leg and finishes with a low kick to the inside of the opponent's right leg (6). Note how the main attack sequence — right hook, left knee, right kick — is the same as in the first technique. Only the first part of the sequence is modified to deal with the different attack. Bustillo says JKD should be simple and direct.

BUSTILLO BIO

Q: *What martial arts experience did you have before you took up jeet kune do?*
A: I practiced judo at 8, boxing at 12, *kajukenbo* at 14, boxing again at 19 and then *jeet kune do* at 24. I studied *escrima* and *kali, muay Thai*, catch-as-catch-can wrestling, and *jujitsu* during and after learning Bruce Lee's JKD.

Q: *Did Lee take offense when he learned that you were interested in other arts?*
A: He would never take offense at any of his students who were interested in other martial arts. He practiced and preached being opened-minded to all arts. "Using no way as way" and "having no limitation as limitation" was his philosophy.

Q: *How did your first meeting with Lee come about?*
A: I first met Bruce at the 1964 International Karate [Championships] in Long Beach, California. My initial impression was that he was average in appearance. But when he took off his shirt and performed his art, it was: "Wow! This is the real deal. He's awesome." He was very confident and self-assured.

Q: *What impressed you most?*
A: His physical power and explosive speed when he executed his JKD techniques, coupled with his presentation of his concepts, philosophy and martial arts training.

Q: *What were Lee's Chinatown classes like?*
A: The average class size was about 12. It was always intense and combative. We warmed up and stretched out before working on strength training and JKD techniques. The second half of the class was sparring. Emphasis was put on being practical and functional in application. Perfection, accuracy, speed and power — in that order — were the main focus when working on techniques.

Q: *Did you receive rank directly from Lee?*
A: I received a first-rank certificate from Bruce in September 1967. It opened doors and opportunities I never expected I would be involved in for the rest of my life.

Q: *Did you ever spar with him?*
A: I, and all the students, sparred with him at one time or another. My first sparring encounter with him was humiliating and frustrating. He was nonclassical and nontraditional in his sparring, and I was very traditional, stiff and nervous in the beginning.

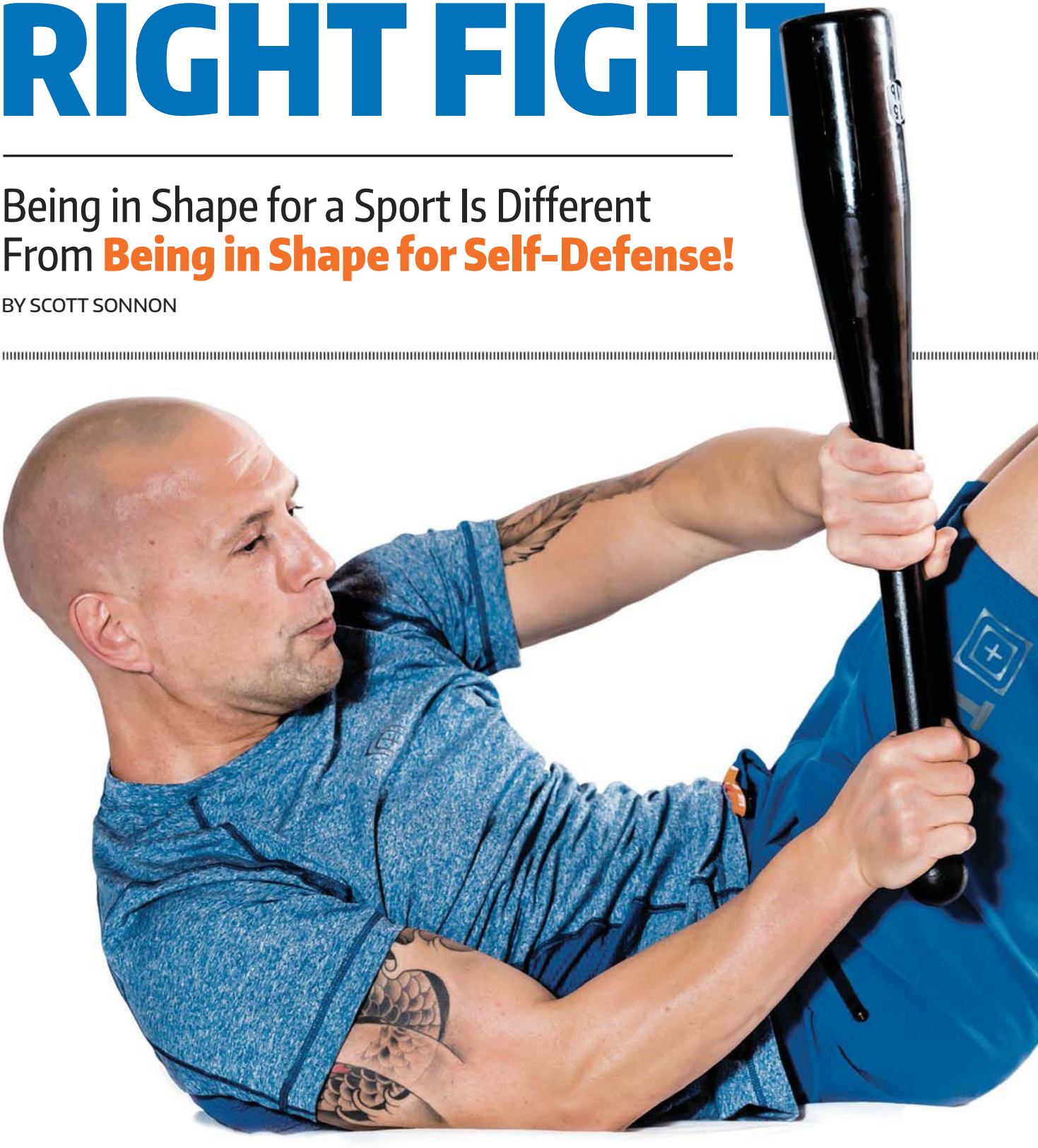
Q: *With his sparring prowess, would Lee have done well in point karate?*
A: The traditional martial arts competition of point karate has evolved into today's mixed martial arts, which Bruce would have loved. It's closer to the concepts of his jeet kune do. Each MMA competitor is effectively practicing his or her own jeet kune do, whether he or she realizes it or not, and is expressing his or her own individual martial arts skills. Of course, there are rules in MMA competition such as no biting, no eye strikes and no hitting to the groin area. As in all martial arts competition, the rules are for the safety of the competitor.

— Paul J. Bax

FIT FOR THE RIGHT FIGHT

Being in Shape for a Sport Is Different From **Being in Shape for Self-Defense!**

BY SCOTT SONNON



Photos Courtesy of Scott Sonnon

What is honey for the fitness enthusiast can be poison for the martial artist. That's because a well-conditioned, well-built martial artist can be well-prepared for the wrong fight. Not only might you be training to develop the wrong energy, but you also might be developing your muscles in a way that limits the range of motion you need to perform your techniques.

In short, you might be making yourself fit for the wrong fight. That can render your moves slow, poorly timed and insufficiently powered for competition or self-defense — even though people who are involved in sports might consider you fit.

This article will explain what you need to know to build "tactical fitness" by posing three questions, highlighting some relevant research, and demonstrating two self-defense sequences and exercises that were designed to augment them. This approach comes from a program I developed to train special-operations personnel and law-enforcement officers, as well as ordinary martial artists who are interested in enhancing their self-defense readiness.

CRUCIAL QUESTIONS

Have you trained the right energy system for the fight you're expecting?

Your metabolic preparation determines whether your training is getting you ready for physical exertion that mimics the tempo of a fight. A fight is not a marathon; it's more like a sprint that may or may not be followed by some jogging and then another sprint — or three.

Many videos of street assaults show incidents in which untrained attackers knock out trained martial artists even though the attackers are using poor technique. This is possible because although they're exerting themselves, the attackers retain enough energy to deliver that "lucky shot" at just the right time. That luck actually comes from having developed good timing and energy conservation through repetitive encounters with victims — for them, it's like training.

✱ Running out of energy in a fight is one of the dangers you face when you elect not to engage in drills that force you to face uncooperative opponents for extended periods.

Have you trained to develop your ability to move while executing the skills you intend to use?

Your biomechanical preparation determines whether your training is helping you learn how to absorb and deliver power while moving the way one does in a fight. Rule of thumb: It's better to throw a pebble from good footing than fire a cannon from a canoe.

In the history of the martial arts, many practitioners have watched the power of their strikes and kicks evaporate on impact, leaving their opponent virtually unscathed. Often the reason is the martial artists failed to develop their structural platform through proper exercise.

✱ Being unable to generate power and transfer it to the target while moving — or from a position you momentarily find yourself in between maneuvers — is one of the dangers of focusing only on *kata* practice. Forms alone won't foster the development of the awareness and mobility you need for self-defense in a dynamic environment.

EXERCISE TO ENHANCE SAMBO GUN DISARM 1 The two-handed diagonal crunch using a clubbell develops the martial artist's ability to strike with the elbows. Such techniques derive power from abdominal contraction and from the posterior chain of muscles, not merely from the shoulders. While lying on his back, Scott Sonnon reaches overhead and grasps the clubbell as shown **(1)**. This position pre-stretches his upper body, enabling him to maximally contract his muscles during the exercise. Next, he exhales and tightens his core, then explosively pulls, with his right elbow moving toward his ribs and his left arm driving that hand forward while his core contracts **(2)**.

SAMBO GUN DISARM 1 When facing an attacker, Scott Sonnon assumes a ready stance and offers to give the man whatever he wants **(1)**. If he's forced to fight, Sonnon shifts his body off the line of fire while using his lead hand to control the weapon **(2)**. His other hand grabs the slide **(3)** and provides him with enough leverage to bend the attacker's wrist so the gun points back at him **(4)**. Sonnon effects an elbow strike to the head, then strips the firearm from the man's grip and racks the slide to clear it **(5)**. He finishes with a forearm strike to the neck, after which he has the option of firing the weapon **(6)**.

EXERCISE TO ENHANCE SAMBO GUN DISARM 2: Scott Sonnon created this medicine-ball exercise to enhance strikes that derive power from hip rotation. From a crouched fighting stance, he leans forward at 45 degrees and lifts the medicine ball high against his ribs **(1)**. He then exhales and drives his palm heel downward, making sure to contract his core and fire his rear hip muscles **(2)**. He mashes the medicine ball into the ground and pins it there by rotating his right knee into it — like a knee ride in grappling **(3)**.

Have you trained to recover from stress and reacquire your skills during a fight?

Your biochemical preparation determines whether you can rapidly regain your wherewithal in order to physically respond in a violent encounter. This can be challenging because of the extreme levels of stress that violence or the threat of violence can bring.

How fast you chemically recover determines whether you experience courage or cowardice. To paraphrase Vince Lombardi, excessive stress makes cowards of us all. This is usually what happens when a martial artist who's experienced only at sparring in the *dojo* or competing in tournaments gets caught in an ambush and is unable to recover — even when it's only a training simulation.

✱ Being unable to regroup and counterattack is one of the dangers of practicing in only preplanned conditions. It's far more beneficial to subject yourself to the unknown, to surprise situations that require you to endure sudden stress, recover quickly and regain your mental composure so you can continue the fight.

PROPER DRILLING

You can reduce the chance that you'll be affected by the aforementioned dangers by running through properly designed self-defense drills on a regular basis, but that will take you only so far. You also should address the issue by engaging in the right kinds of physical conditioning.

Exercise science teaches a principle called SAID, which stands for "specific adaptation to imposed demands." It holds that how well you perform is directly proportional to how well you've prepared. (In reality, it's more accurate to say the worst you've prepared is the best you can hope to perform, but that's a subject for another article.)

When creating an exercise routine, it pays to keep in mind the advice of experts. In "Specificity of Training: Metabolic and Circulatory Responses," which E. Fox, D. McKenzie and K. Cohen wrote for *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise,* the authors claim that performance is specific to the movements you do in training and the tempo and pace with which you do them.

Ellen Kreighbaum and Katharine M. Barthels wrote in *Biomechanics: A Qualitative Approach for Studying Human Movement* that training specifically for the pattern, joint position, speed and type of contraction produces improvement *only* for those movements. Specific training yields the greatest improvements.

What this means is the transfer of an exercise to a skill — in this case, a martial arts technique — will happen only if the exercise and the skill are very similar. Semyon M. Slobounov noted in *Injuries in Athletics: Causes and Consequences* that as the degree of similarity between exercise and the skill decreases, the benefits decrease and eventually even conflict. Put another way, your exercise choices can hurt your performance of a martial arts technique.

It's important that your movements are in the same range as the martial arts technique's movement pattern,

SAMBO GUN DISARM 2 Scott Sonnon adopts a ready position in front of the gunman **(1)**. When his offer to comply is rejected, he shifts to the left to get off the line of fire and grabs the weapon with his left hand **(2)**. Sonnon rotates his hips counterclockwise to deliver an overhand strike to the face **(3)**. (Note that the technique was selected to avoid placing the striking arm in the path of a bullet.) He repeats the strike until the attacker's intention weakens. Next, Sonnon reaches under the gun so he can grip the backstrap **(4)**. Once he's established a "cradle" position, he drives his left elbow over the man's forearm and drops his head **(5)** before explosively stepping backward to strip the firearm out of his grasp **(6)**. He racks the slide to clear the weapon, then unleashes a forearm strike to the shoulder or neck and prepares to fire, if need be **(7)**.

joint position, speed and type of contraction without mimicking the martial arts technique too closely. Mel C. Siffe, Ph.D., affirms this in *Supertraining* when he writes that if you simulate a skill under resistance, you'll slow the speed and decrease the power of the skill when you're calling on it for real.

A potentially more damaging fitness practice is the "extreme workout." Exercise physiologists define this as a routine that leads to a heart rate that's greater than the maximum you should push your heart to in training. (It's usually calculated in beats per minute by subtracting your age from 220.) When your heart exceeds its max, two negatives happen: You don't adapt to the exercise because your body is no longer reacting physiologically; it's reacting chemically. Even worse, you lose access to the skills you've trained so hard to develop.

In case you're wondering why that's something to be avoided at all costs — and this will benefit all who engage in cross-training for enhanced martial arts performance — consider the following:

- At 65 percent of your heart-rate max, you begin to lose fine-motor skills and hand/eye coordination.
- At 85 percent, you begin to lose complex-motor skills, which can sabotage the remainder of your martial arts techniques.
- At 100 percent and higher, you lose gross-motor skills, such as the ability to walk and stand. A host of phenomena are associated with insufficiently prepared people who find themselves in an ambush: tunnel vision, auditory exclusion, short-term memory loss, fumbling, stuttering, shaking, freezing, feinting, spontaneous bowel and bladder elimination, and so on.

(These data come from research conducted on law-enforcement personnel who were in life-or-death situations, as described in *Sharpening the Warrior's Edge: The Psychology & Science of Training,* by Bruce K. Siddle.)

THE SOLUTION

No matter which martial art you practice, by now you likely agree that you can benefit from enhanced tactical fitness. The next step is creating a program that meshes with your art. Start by analyzing the fighting techniques you use most in the dojo, then find or create drills and exercises that enhance those movements. Make sure your solutions simulate the necessary range of motion and take place in positions that mimic the self-defense scenarios for which you're training.

To get on the right path, refer to the two gun-defense sequences shown here and the exercises designed to enhance the fitness needed to perform the key movements more efficiently. By following this lead, you'll be able to do the same for your go-to self-defense techniques.

● **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** *Scott Sonnon is the founder of the TACFIT Academy, a tactical fitness ambassador for 5.11 Tactical and an adjunct instructor for the U.S. Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. Men's Health named him one of the top 25 trainers in the world. He's a five-time world martial arts champion and five-time USA National Sambo Team coach. TACFITAcademy.com*

PATRIOT MISSILE SELF-DEFENSE!

PAUL VUNAK ON THE SCIENCE OF DESTRUCTIONS

STORY BY S.D. SEONG | PHOTOGRAPHY BY COREY SORENSEN

LOCATION: Las Vegas
EVENT: UFC 168
DATE: December 28, 2013
BOUT: Anderson Silva vs. Chris Weidman
ACTION: Silva throws a roundhouse kick, and Weidman reacts by lifting his leg. Silva's shin slams into Weidman's knee, snapping the kicker's fibula and tibia. The excruciating injury leaves Silva's lower leg and foot looking like they're disconnected from the rest of his body.

LOCATION: Hong Kong
EVENT: filming of *Ip Man 3*
DATE: May 2015
BOUT: Donnie Yen vs. Mike Tyson
ACTION: In a scene from the movie, Tyson throws a punch that puts his fist in contact with Yen's elbow. Despite the fact that it's not a real fight, Tyson suffers a fractured finger.

"I've been talking about destructions for years," says Paul Vunak, one of the world's best-known self-defense instructors. "When MMA fans watched what happened to Anderson Silva, they witnessed what I've seen happen probably 15 times in my martial arts career. I always knew it was just a matter of time before we saw that in the UFC."

Here's why: A conventional leg check is a technique that entails simply picking up your leg as a defense against a roundhouse kick, Vunak says. If the check is done properly, the kicker's shin will smash into your shin. That not only stops the kick but also inflicts a whole lot of hurt.

A destruction takes it one step further. It positions your checking leg so your knee is directly in the path of the kick. "When you do that, 99 out of 100 times, the guy who kicked you will be out of commission," Vunak says. "Sometimes his leg will break — as Silva found out.

"I knew that probability would guarantee that one of the checks we see in MMA eventually would become a destruction. I always thought that if anyone in the UFC took the time to learn destructions, it would quickly convince his opponents never to kick him again in a match."

(1)

AGAINST A KICK

Paul Vunak (left) faces his opponent (1). As soon as the man unleashes his roundhouse kick, Vunak raises his right leg so his knee is in the path of the leg (2). He immediately capitalizes on the opening the pain provides (3) by hitting him with a straight blast (4-5).

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

Vunak knows of what he speaks. "Back in the 1970s, I used to get my butt kicked at the Kali Academy because I was a teenager sparring with guys in their 30s," he says. "Dan Inosanto felt sorry for me, so he taught me destructions. A week later, nobody wanted to kick or punch me anymore. They just stood there. Then they all started using destructions, and nobody wanted to kick or punch anybody in the whole class. Finally, Dan said, 'All right, you jerks! No more destructions.' When you're going against somebody who knows these techniques, you don't even want to throw a punch or kick at them."

WEAPONS OF DESTRUCTION

The human body carries four natural weapons that can be used for destructions: the elbows and the knees. "If your opponent throws a roundhouse kick, your goal is to make contact with his shin using the tip of your knee," Vunak says. "When I first learned this, it was the most counterintuitive thing I'd ever heard. I thought, Dear God, I'm going to break my knee!

"I quickly learned that if you're standing straight-legged and you get hit in the knee, sure it's going to hurt. But if your leg is completely bent — so your heel is near your butt — it doesn't hurt when someone's shin crashes into it. You may have a bruise the next day, but that's it."

It's similar with the elbows, he says — which is what Tyson found out. If you flex your arm and position the tip of your elbow in the path of a punch, you won't feel much but you can bet your opponent will.

"Think of yourself as a porcupine, with your elbows and knees like the tips of your quills," Vunak says.

SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

"The Filipino martial arts — I'm talking about *kali* — is the only system that defangs the snake, which is a synonym for using a destruction," Vunak says.

FMA is best-known for stick and knife techniques, but the principles also apply to empty-hand destructions, Vunak says. "If you're in a stick fight with a Filipino, he won't block your attacks like they teach in other arts. Instead, he'll smash your hand with his stick. That's not a block; it's a destruction.

"It's similar in a knife fight. The Filipino martial arts teach that your only chance is to cut your opponent's knife hand as it comes in. You can't block because that will just give him another opportunity to cut you."

CALLING ALL KIDS

Paul Vunak is such a staunch believer in the benefits of martial arts training for everyone that he encourages all the instructors in his Progressive Fighting Systems organization to teach at least one physically challenged child at no charge. Most of them discover how enriching the experience is and go on to teach more than one, he says.

Because it can be tough to find interested kids, Vunak would like to appeal to *Black Belt* readers who may know a child in need of the kind of self-esteem boost only the martial arts can give. Go to fighting.net to get in touch with a local PFS instructor.

AGAINST A PUNCH

The opponent (right) threatens Paul Vunak, who already has his elbows held high for a possible destruction [1]. When the man punches, Vunak repositions his left elbow into the path of the punch [2]. As his adversary reacts to the pain [3], Vunak kicks him in the groin [4] and finishes with an elbow to the head [5].

CHALLENGE OF DEPLOYMENT

Just how hard is it to take a small object like a knee or an elbow and insert it in the path of an incoming kick or punch in time to intercept the attack? "Destructions are just like any other type of targeting in a fight," Vunak says. "For example, if somebody throws a jab at you, you'll probably use your rear hand to parry it — that's just how you stop a jab. There's not much difference between that and putting your elbow up. The distance from your shoulder to your elbow when doing a destruction and the distance from your shoulder to your hand when parrying a jab are roughly similar, so the movements are not that different.

"Remember that you don't have to move your elbow or knee that much for it to be a destruction. Your elbows should be more or less in front of your face most of the time, anyway. Yes, that makes it look like you're leaving your stomach open the way Thai boxers do, but it offers lots of protection for your face. If your opponent aims a jab at your nose, his fist will come straight in, and it will run into your elbow if you move it just a little. All you have to do is have his hand, your elbow and your nose in a straight line. Believe it or not, it's amazingly simple."

Makes sense. However, using a destruction against a leg technique would seem to be more difficult. After all, if an opponent is about to kick, you usually won't know whether it will be a high kick, mid-level kick or low kick, so how can you determine where to set up your destruction?

"If you're in a fight and don't know what a destruction is, you still have to differentiate a high kick from a mid-level kick and a low kick to be able to deal with it — that's your responsibility," Vunak says. "If you think a low kick is coming and it's really a high kick, you're going to get knocked out whether you try a destruction or not.

"To use a destruction against a kick, the skills you use to determine the height of the kick don't change. What does change is that when it comes in low, instead of doing a check, you point your knee at it. If it comes in high, forget about a destruction because you can't get your knee up there. Kick him in the groin instead."

For the most part, using a destruction requires all the attributes you need to fight without destructions, Vunak says. "Look at it this way: The same footwork, timing, distancing and knowledge of spatial relationships that it takes to block a weapon can also be used to destroy it."

ACCIDENTAL DESTRUCTION OR INTENTIONAL TECHNIQUE?

It's unclear whether the finger fracture suffered by boxer Mike Tyson at the hands of kung fu stylist Donnie Yen was an intentional destruction or the result of accidental contact. "Either way, it's a good reminder that if you spar enough, you're eventually going to run into an elbow or a knee," Paul Vunak says.

"But if you do it on purpose, you have incidents like the Anderson Silva fight," he adds. "That technique was taught to his opponent by a New York trainer named Ray Longo. Ray is a full instructor under me. He's been teaching destructions for 20 years. That technique was totally intentional."

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

BY ANY OTHER NAME

Destructions are an implementation of the Filipino martial arts strategy of defanging the snake, says Paul Vunak (left). To demonstrate, he and his opponent take up training knives (1). The man attempts to cut, prompting Vunak to attack his knife hand — in essence, defanging the snake that's attacking him (2). His technique ends the exchange and takes the weapon hand out of the fight (3-4).

BETTER THAN BLOCKING

Why should you add new techniques to your arsenal and devote training time to them when you already know how to block? "When you block a strike, you're not accomplishing anything," Vunak says. "You just give your opponent a chance to hit you again. However, if you use a destruction on a kick, you can make your opponent end up like Anderson Silva. If you use a destruction on a punch, you can make your opponent end up like Mike Tyson.

"Some people think they can hurt you with a hard block. That's silly. It's never worked in the history of the martial arts. But what has worked many times is when a guy tries to kick you, you hit his shin with your knee instead of your shin and he can't continue. Or he throws a jab at you and instead of parrying it, you make sure his fist hits the tip of your elbow and he can't continue."

In a nutshell: Blocking in a fight is not unlike erecting a shield around the targeted body part. Yes, it can stop an attack, but to be fail-safe, it needs to be able to stop every subsequent attack. In contrast, using a destruction is like firing a Patriot missile at an incoming attack. You take the fight to your enemy to eliminate his capacity to attack again.

"A block defends against a strike," Vunak says. "A destruction destroys the strike and the weapon."

BACKUP PLAN

What happens if you try a destruction but don't make contact with the incoming weapon? "The same thing as when you try a block and miss," Vunak says. "If you position your elbow for a destruction and fail to stop the punch, the fist will either miss your face or hit your face. That's no different than if you attempted a block.

"If you go for a leg check and your timing is off, your opponent is going to kick your leg. If you go for a low leg check and he kicks high, he's going to kick you. That's the nature of combat, and it's the same when you use destructions. They don't have any magical properties."

For that reason, it's best to have a backup plan, Vunak adds. For example, if a punch is coming your way and you think the time is right to use a destruction, it's a good idea to move your head out of the way at the same time. "When using destructions, you need the same footwork, the same agility, the same head movement and so on," he says.

"And by the way, you don't do a destruction on every blow," he adds. "If you're in a fight and the guy throws a double jab, a cross and a kick, you might use a couple of plain old blocks against the jabs, parry the cross and take the kick, maybe on accident. And then he throws another punch and — boom! — you destroy it."

At most, you should employ a destruction against one of every five techniques your opponent throws, Vunak says. "A destruction is not something you can just use when you're getting out of your car and a bad guy runs up to you and throws a punch," he says. "You have to set it up and have the timing and distancing right. That will give you the best chance of success."

Paul Vunak is a Southern California–based instructor of jeet kune do and the Filipino martial arts. For more information, visit fighting.net.

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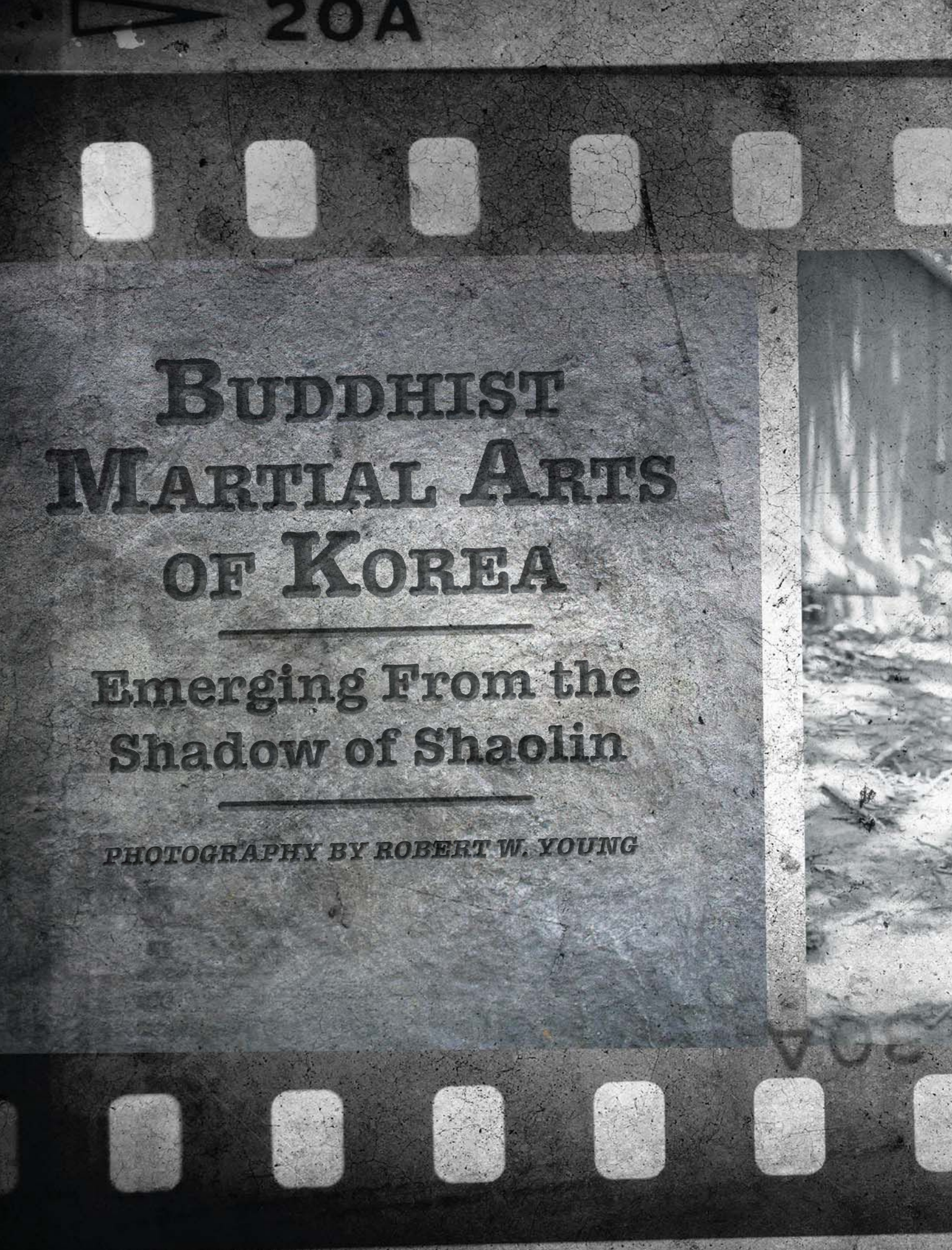


Buddhist Martial Arts of Korea

Emerging From the Shadow of Shaolin

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERT W. YOUNG

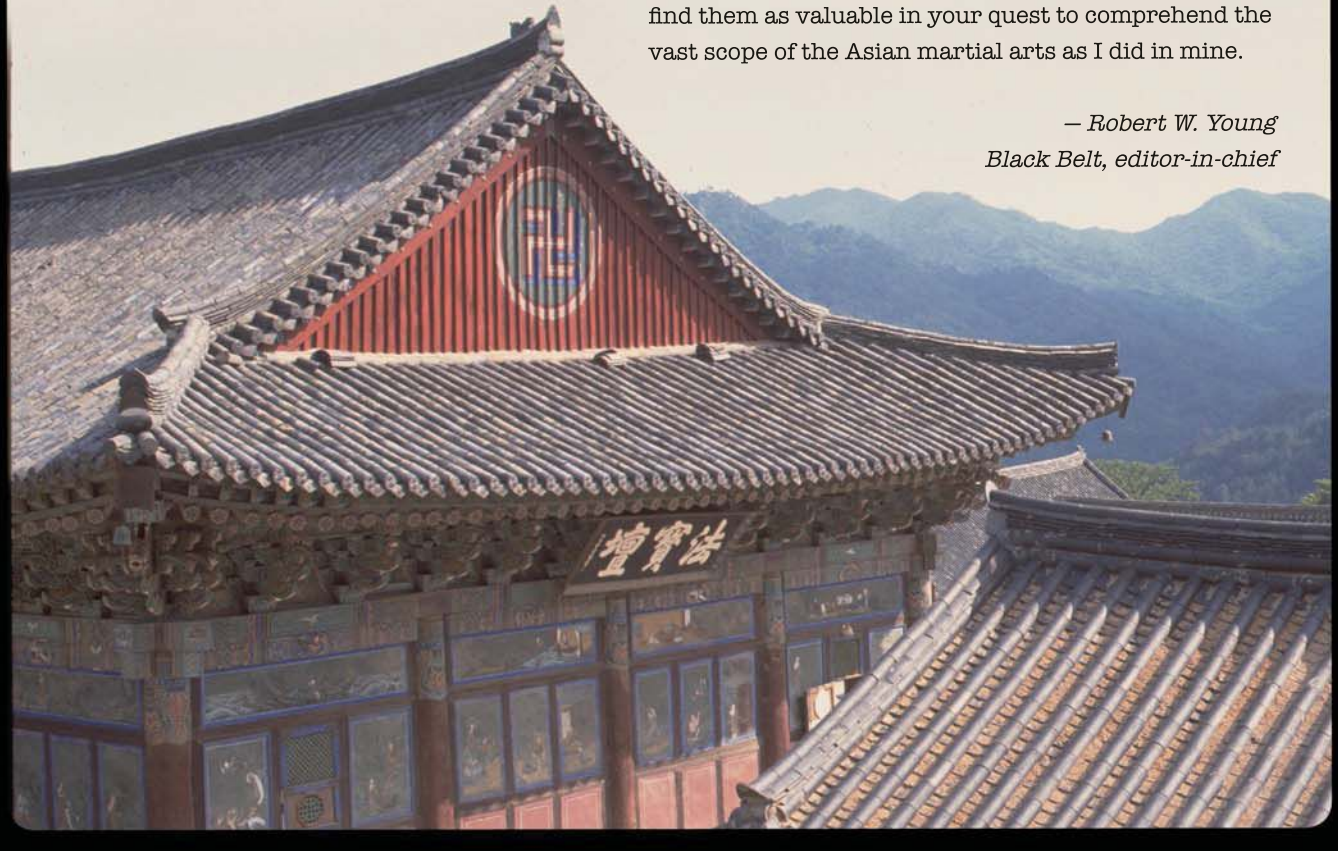
I blame David Carradine, may he rest in peace. If he hadn't done such a fine job portraying Kwai Chang Caine for three seasons on the *Kung Fu* TV series, chances are the Western world — or, at least, America — wouldn't think that China's Shaolin Temple is the sole source of Buddhist martial arts in Asia.

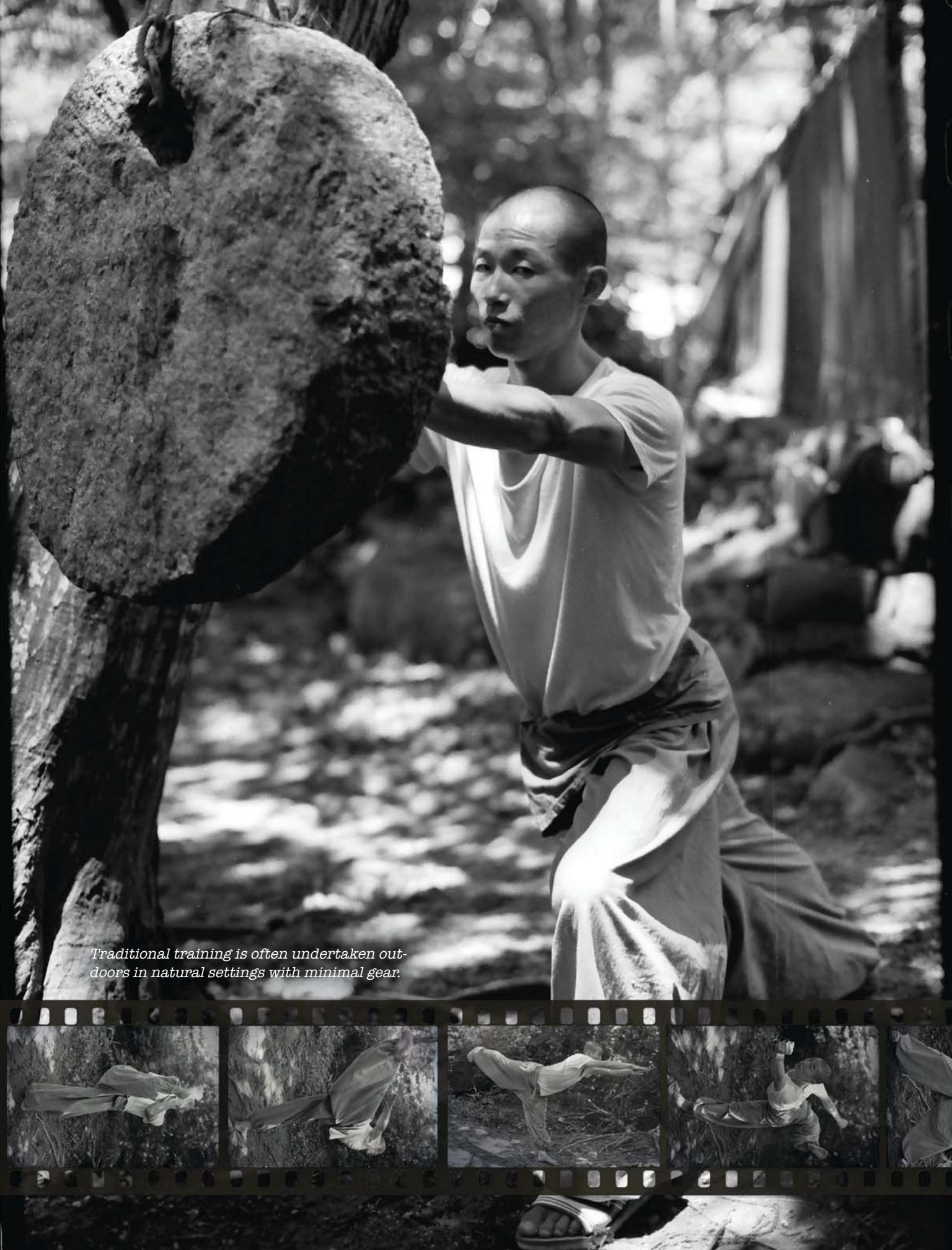
Back in the mid-1980s, I first heard rumors of a little-known Buddhist fighting art in South Korea. But seeing how that was long before the advent of the Internet, searching for clues proved an arduous task — especially because I was not yet a *Black Belt* staffer and therefore had no access to the magazine's network of contacts. My only option was to fly to South Korea and find out for myself.

Once there, I found work as an English teacher and started making connections with local martial artists. Months later, a lead from a martial arts researcher pointed me to a temple called Pomosa (also spelled Beomeosa), where I located a monk who taught a style known as *bul mu do,* meaning "Buddhist martial way." I wrote about that encounter in the May 1988 issue of *Black Belt.*

In the ensuing years, I managed to locate a few other temples and hermitages where the Buddhist arts are practiced. I even found a facility in Seoul that teaches a Buddhist martial art called *seon mu do* to the public. During a few of those encounters, I was allowed to photograph the monks and students in training. Presented here are some of those images, many of which have never been published. I hope you find them as valuable in your quest to comprehend the vast scope of the Asian martial arts as I did in mine.

— Robert W. Young
Black Belt, editor-in-chief





Traditional training is often undertaken outdoors in natural settings with minimal gear.

The main stances and techniques of bul mu do forms have been depicted in temple paintings.

Life as a Temporary Martial Monk

South Korea created its Temple Stay program to help visitors better understand Buddhism. It offers various kinds of practice sessions, such as chanting, sitting mediation and the tea ceremony. Participants strive to find their true self while harmonizing with nature. Since 1992, a temple called Golgulsa has hosted *seon mu do* training programs for those who wish to experience Buddhism through one of Korea's Buddhist martial arts. This is how a typical day in the program unfolded:

4:00 a.m.	Wake-up call
4:30 a.m.	Chanting and sutra reading
5:00 a.m.	Meditation
6:00 a.m.	Jogging or walking
6:50 a.m.	Breakfast
8:30 a.m.	Cleaning temple grounds
9:00 a.m.	Martial arts training
11:00 a.m.	Chanting
11:50 a.m.	Lunch
2:00 p.m.	Work
5:00 p.m.	Break
5:30 p.m.	Dinner
6:00 p.m.	Chanting
7:00 p.m.	Martial arts training
9:00 p.m.	End of the day
9:30 p.m.	Bed

Many of the activities have a deeper meaning than their names indicate. For example, food is eaten communally. Known as *balwoo konyang,* the practice allows adherents to reflect on themselves and how they have the potential to awaken to a pure life. It's a form of active Seon (Zen in Japanese) meditation that nurtures the understanding of the need for order, harmony and ultimately respect within the temple. That, in turn, fosters a deeper sense of compassion for the people who've made the meal possible.

— Gregory C. Brundage and Gray Mills

A monk who has undertaken a vow of silence treats a form as moving meditation.

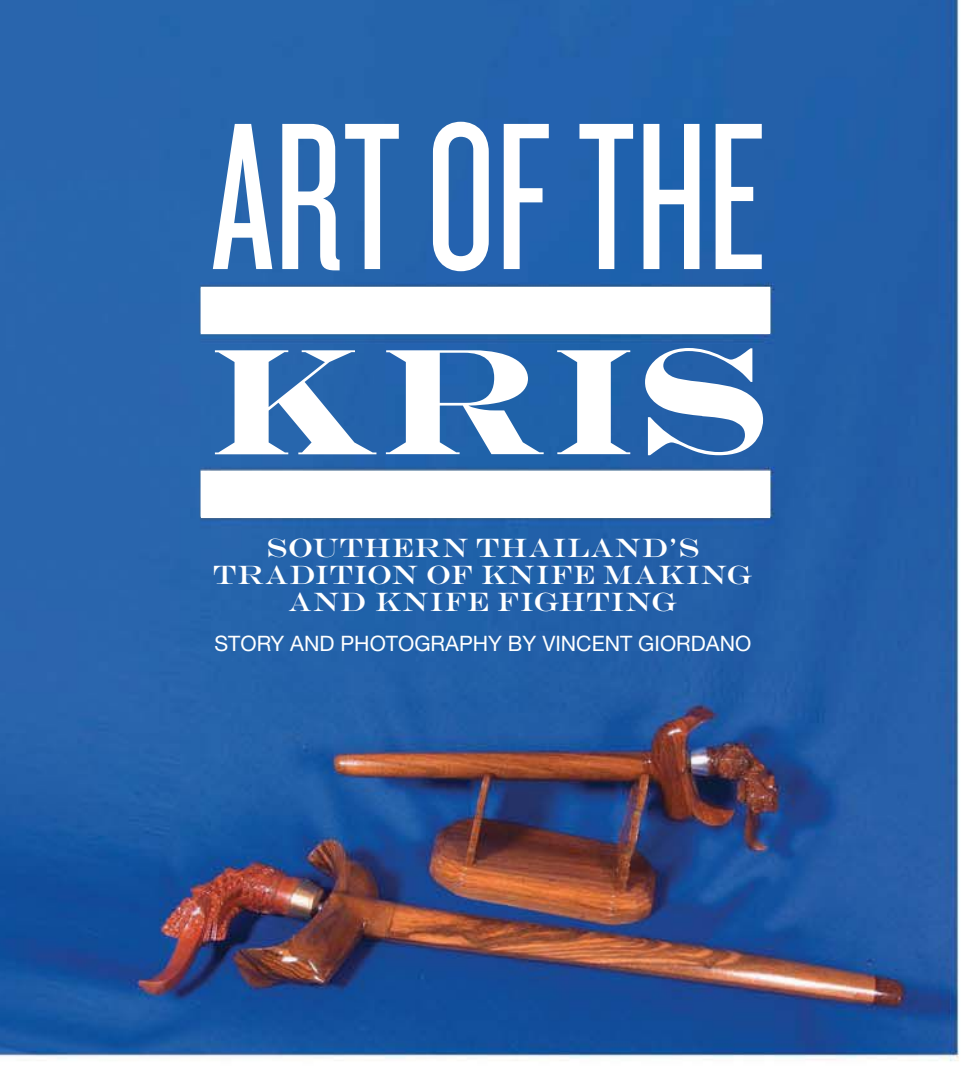
FROM THE BLACK BELT ARCHIVES

Read "Temple Martial Arts Training: From the Shaolin Monastery to Modern Times," the May 1998 story that Robert W. Young wrote about one of Korea's Buddhist martial arts, at blackbeltmag.com.

ART OF THE KRIS

SOUTHERN THAILAND'S TRADITION OF KNIFE MAKING AND KNIFE FIGHTING

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY VINCENT GIORDANO



In Yala province, 500 miles south of Bangkok, lies a village that's renowned for preserving the ancient art of *kris* making. The kris (also spelled *keris* or *krit)* is a distinctively shaped dagger that's both a weapon and a spiritual object with numerous myths and superstitions attached to it.

The origins of the kris aren't clear, but we do know that the modern version of the weapon has existed since the mid-14th century. It likely originated in East Java, where it was derived from an older style of blade, possibly one of Hindu origin. The kris eventually spread from Java to other parts of the Indonesian archipelago and then to the Southeast Asian regions now known as Malaysia, Brunei, Philippines, Thailand and Singapore.

MARTIAL ARTS MECCA

Thailand has fostered the development of an array of arts, but unfortunately it's only the indigenous ones that attract attention from scholars. For example, the region boasts many forms of *silat* — which the Thais call *sila* — that grew from the martial traditions of Malaysia and Indonesia, but few foreigners have heard of them.

One needs to travel all the way to the southernmost tip of Thailand to find the cradle of the kris. Yala and its neighboring provinces have long held a Muslim majority with close to 70 percent of the population being Malay-speaking Muslims and the remainder Thai and Thai-Chinese Buddhists. In the past decade, this region has lived under a blanket of fear because of an anti-government insurgency that's claimed the lives of more than 4,000 people of both religions.

As of yet, no military official or insurgent leader has tried to prevent the people of Yala from making kris knives even though production is technically illegal. Perhaps it's because the code of conduct adhered to by the craftsmen keeps the blades from falling into the hands of those who would use them for illicit purposes.

The tradition of kris making was nearly lost for a generation when World War II saw Thailand's military field marshal ban it outright. His goal was to impose Thai culture on the region, and his "solution" involved prohibiting residents from wearing Malay sarongs, speaking the local language and fabricating kris.

The citizens of Yala were upset because they regarded the kris as part of their culture. Their love of the blade stemmed from their first exposure to it some 300 years ago when the then-governor invited a renowned Indonesian bladesmith named Toe Panaesarah to craft a special kris for his village. In those days, it was customary for high-ranked officials to wear an ornate kris at ceremonies and functions — as a symbol of power. They would often offer a kris as a token of friendship when a dignitary would visit and when an ordinary citizen did a good deed for the community.

Once that special kris was received by the governor, it grew in reputation and was eventually dubbed the Kris Panaesarah. Its maker went on to teach the locals how to fashion different styles of the weapon. What made his method stand out was his mastery of pattern welding, known as *pamor.* Considered the genesis of the blade's spirit, pattern welding entails combining various metals in layers, then applying heat to bond them and using acid to highlight the boundaries between the layers. The master's knowledge of pattern welding and blade craftsmanship was so extensive it was recorded in *The Panaesarah Book of the Kris.*

THAI TRANSFORMATION

One hundred years later, the heads of the Thai village organized a competition designed to find the finest kris in the southern provinces. Among the tests the candidates were subjected to was shattering a thick earthenware jar filled with water. Only the knives of Bun Dai Sara's clan passed the test, earning the family the respect and admiration of the entire region.

Sara's popularity and stature in the community rose as a result, and the governor of the province selected him to craft his personal kris. The master also was tasked with training a new generation of artisans who could not only make the weapons but also wield them in combat.

A modern descendant of this lineage

Teeparee Atabu poses with a kris and its sheath.

is Teeparee Atabu. This former farmer began studying the art of the kris under Tuan Bukut Long Saree and remained with him until he died in 2004.

While Atabu maintains a deep respect for tradition and follows the rules of conduct to which his ancestors adhered, he embraces a more open attitude designed to ensure this martial treasure will survive. That's why he agreed to share with me — and, indirectly, with *Black Belt* readers — the details of his art.

When Atabu is about to create a kris, he first must pick the appropriate time to begin. This is because the kris and each component that goes into it are imbued with symbolism. The next step is to determine the desired blade shape, either straight or curved. The straight blade is the older design and the more common one, while the curved blade is more iconic. Mythologically speaking, the straight blade symbolizes a serpent in meditation and the wavy blade a serpent in motion, Atabu explained.

The other components of the kris

SIT-REP

Thanks to Teeparee Atabu, the art of the *kris*, once a closely guarded secret, is now taught via vocational courses held at cultural centers in southern Thailand. His wish is to give anyone who wants to devote his or her life to learning this traditional part of his culture, regardless of that person's religious or ethnic background, an opportunity to do so. The kris, when viewed as a symbol of spiritual strength, can bring people together, he believes. By spreading this notion, he hopes to sow the seeds of unity in a world that's plagued by sectarian violence.

SILAT IN ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT

One of the first *Black Belt* features to investigate the art of silat appeared in the June 1965 issue. Now you can download that article in its entirety. Just visit blackbeltmag.com/free-guides/ and look for the one labeled "Pencak Silat: Techniques and History of the Indonesian Martial Arts."

are the hilt and sheath. The most important hilt to originate from the Yala region is the *tajong.* Regarded as one of the most powerful versions, it's often seen on warrior weapons. The tajong evolved from an early Shiva-influenced design to one that resembles a bird (said to be the kingfisher), betraying its Hindu and Majapahit influences. The goal of the craftsman, Atabu said, is to ensure that the hilt is beautiful as well as functional — which is why the carved head must fit snugly in the palm of the hand much like the grip of a pistol.

In the Bun Dai Sara lineage, the sheath of the kris is large and sturdy. That's because the fighting system includes techniques for simultaneously using both sheath and blade in battle. The sheath has a long, rounded body and is often covered with silver or gold. It can have a *sapay,* a "sheath wing" crosspiece with upward-curving ends.

On average, it takes a month to craft a kris, Atabu said. Two weeks are devoted to the hilt, one week to the sheath and one week to the blade.

FIGHTING FUNCTIONALITY

The term "kris" is believed to come from an old Javanese word that means "to stab" or "to pierce." That etymology reveals much about the way the kris is used in combat — primarily as a close-range thrusting weapon. The sinuous nature of the blade enables it to do maximum damage to soft tissue while permitting the user to easily remove it from an enemy's body. The techniques for doing this are practiced with a live blade because it's believed this teaches not only proper mechanics but also respect for the weapon.

Atabu guides his students through a carefully constructed course of study that lasts two years. They begin with isolated footwork patterns and the *ram kris,* the dances that hold the key to unlocking the complicated patterns of movement and strategy. This enables them to assimilate not only the techniques of the kris but also the intricacies of the culture.

In the past, the ram kris was performed at important social gatherings. The display of the practitioners' skill at dance, as well as their ability with the blade, served to entertain and attract new students. In modern times, the ram kris is viewed mostly as a component of the martial art — although it still can be seen at special community events.

That exposure helps ensure that the kris will remain an important part of life in Thailand's Yala province, providing residents with an invaluable link to their past. The fact that the knife lineage and the art that accompanies it have taken hold in neighboring Pattani, Narathiwat and Songkhla provinces serves as reassurance to the martial arts world that this treasure won't be lost any time soon.

● **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** *Vincent Giordano is a New York–based martial artist, researcher and documentary filmmaker. For information about his DVD titled Village of the Keris: The Art of Bun Dai Sara, visit thaikeris.com.*

LEVELING THE FIELD

Female Airman Kicks Butt as a Marine Corps Martial Arts Program Instructor!

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD D. LEWIS

THE sickening sound of a bone breaking was the first indication her elbow had snapped.

"It was just an armbar," she said. "I thought I could get out of it."

Didn't it hurt?

"Not really," she said, flashing a big Hilary Swank smile. "I'm double-jointed, so I don't have the same pain-receptor feedback as most people. But then it popped, and I said, 'Oops!'"

It was just another day at the office, it would seem. In this case, however, the office was a sweat-soaked gym, and the laborer was the first Air Force female to become certified as a Marine Corps Martial Arts Program instructor.

Meet Staff Sgt. Jessica Field.

OUT OF THE BOX

"I had dabbled in martial arts for years," Field said. "In college, I practiced *aikido* and Brazilian *jiu-jitsu,* but I was looking for something practical."

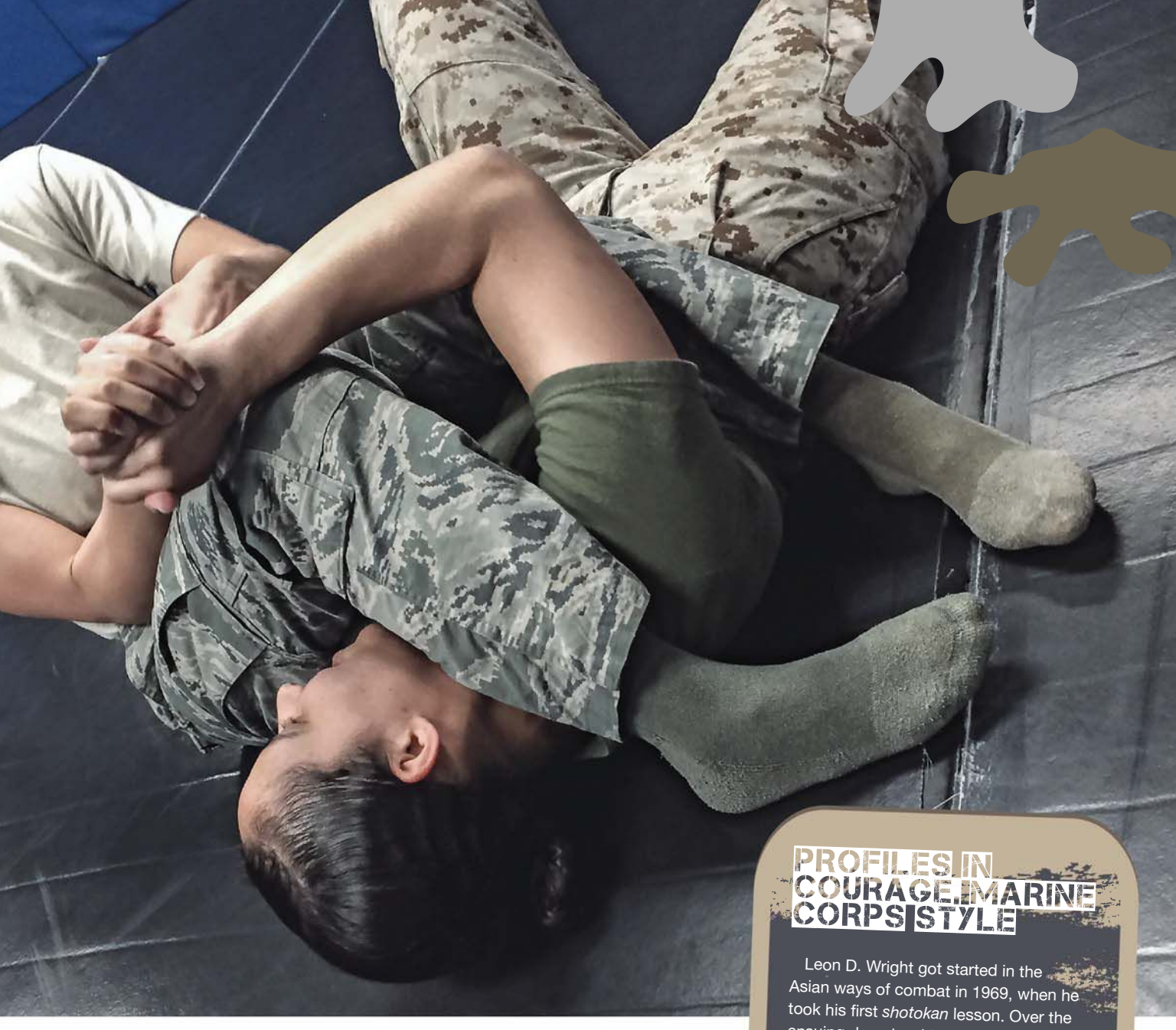
Note Field's use of the word "practical." Because she was an Air Force intelligence analyst facing imminent deployment on a top-secret mission in the Third World, she had big-time safety concerns.

"I wanted to learn a martial art that could get me out of a jam, if needed, and my friends recommended the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program," she said.

Unlike the Marines, which dumped its LINE system in 2002 and replaced it with MCMAP, and the Army, which launched its Modern Army Combatives Program in 2007, the Air Force didn't have a widely available self-defense program in 2010, when Field was searching for instruction. That forced her to look elsewhere, but she concluded that the other fighting systems to which she had access lacked the practicality she needed. "I explored other options but liked MCMAP the best," she said. "It has more of a range tailored to outside-the-box situations."

MCMAP specializes in outside-the-box thinking — which is evidenced, in part, by its emphasis on using weapons of opportunity. "It's driven by the philosophy of 'one mind, any weapon,'" said *Black Belt* Hall of Famer Leon D. Wright, a certified MCMAP subject-matter expert and the former head instructor at the MCMAP (Far East) School.

That philosophy appealed to Field's practical side. Gunnery Sgt. Wilson Dunn, a MCMAP black belt, described it in a similarly practical way: "You search your surroundings for anything you can use as a weapon



against the enemy. [For example], I could use this computer monitor to bludgeon you."

His statement was blunt, but it revealed an essential component of MCMAP — it teaches students how to apply violence to achieve an objective in a clinical way, "detaching emotions like fear, hesitation — things that get Marines killed," Dunn added.

Field summed it up: "I liked the realism."

AND INTO THE FIRE

In MCMAP, instructors have Marines sparring from day one, referring to this approach as "indoctrination to violence." The goal is to enable fighting men and women to come out on top in a one-on-one — or one-on-two — battle for life, Dunn said.

Field admitted that MCMAP training pushed her out of her comfort zone again and again. As intimidating as that might sound, she insisted the program is safe and the instructors are encouraging and patient with new practitioners. They welcome students from all military branches who are brave enough to hit the mats, she said.

As for her broken elbow — "That's not uncommon," Dunn said, "because these are combatives, and there are risks

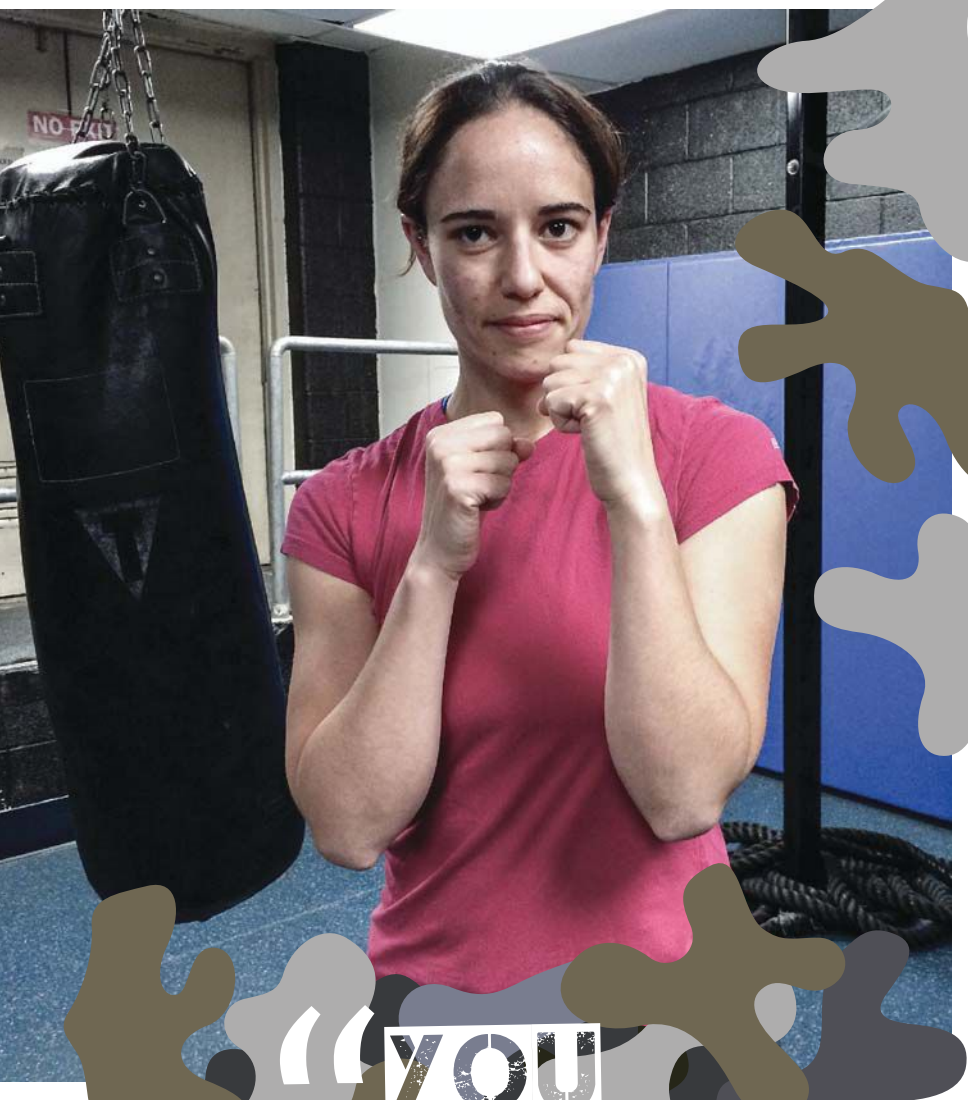
PROFILES IN COURAGE, MARINE CORPS STYLE

Leon D. Wright got started in the Asian ways of combat in 1969, when he took his first *shotokan* lesson. Over the ensuing decades, his passion for the arts never wavered. In 1982 he enlisted in the Marines and stayed until 2003, when he retired as a gunnery sergeant.

In 2001 Wright helped launch the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program (Far East) School in Okinawa and served as its chief instructor. In 2003 he was named a MCMAP subject-matter expert. The same year, he retired from the Corps but was allowed to remain in Afghanistan to continue teaching Marines.

Wright later received a certificate of appreciation from Col. George Bristol, founder of MCMAP, on behalf of Brig. Gen. Larry Nicholson, commending him for having volunteered his time to train personnel at Camp Leatherneck in Afghanistan.

— *Editors*



"YOU CARRY YOURSELF DIFFERENTLY WHEN YOU WALK INTO A ROOM"

involved" — Field admitted it was her fault for not tapping. Although the injury occurred in January 2015, her limb has healed completely and shows no indications of having been damaged. Examining the arm, all anyone can see now is a honed musculature, a visual testament to Field's conditioning.

"I weighed 175 pounds before I joined the Air Force," Field said. "That's why I'm so committed to fitness." MCMAP was the driving force behind her transformation, and it continues to be a pillar of her healthy lifestyle. In addition to her martial arts training, the plucky NCO lifts weights, does calisthenics and runs with her husband, a former Marine who also trained in MCMAP. But —

"We don't spar," Field said. "For the sake of our marriage."

PRESENT FROM THE PAST

MCMAP sprouted from roots that date back to the earliest days of the Corps, when Marines in boarding parties had to rely on hand-to-hand fighting techniques. The ensuing decades saw the system evolve considerably with help from numerous martial arts experts.

The modern incarnation of the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program also incorporates techniques designed to injure or incapacitate, not just to kill. That's a fairly recent response to calls for the U.S. military to use nonlethal force in certain situations. Case in point: Marines often find themselves involved in police actions, crowd and riot control, and other situations that require them to interact with civilian aggressors.

Obviously, such assignments demand versatility with respect to technique, as well as practitioners who can make decisions on the fly. The decision-making ability comes from the training, while the techniques come from a variety of martial arts, including those from the East (aikido, karate and so on) and those from the West (boxing).

Field is a fan of that diversity. She believes that everyone who studies self-defense should know how to throw a jab, but she said her favorite

part of the combative arts is ground fighting. "I like jiu-jitsu," she said. "I'm small, and it helps me fight bigger, stronger guys."

Bolstered by her training, the staff sergeant seems much taller than her 5 feet 4 inches. "That's the confidence you get from MCMAP," she said. "It carries over into every part of your life. You carry yourself differently when you walk into a room."

RANK AND FILE

Like most modern fighting systems, the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program uses belts to denote rank. Specifically, it features the Marine-friendly colors tan, gray, green, brown and black, Dunn said.

Field holds a green belt with an instructor tab, which she earned during a grueling course held at the Martial Arts Center of Excellence in Quantico, Virginia. For reference, green belt is the level expected of Marine Corps infantry troops. She said she hopes to test for her brown belt by the end of 2015 and has petitioned the Air Force to allow her to wear her rank with her camouflage uniform like the Marines do.

One of the goals of Field's training is to convey to others the notion that combat skills learned from MCMAP can benefit any service member who's interested in self-development. "I'd like to spread expertise and get other instructors certified — to get it to the Air Force or anyone interested," she said.

Because she earned her instructor tab, she's certified to teach the art to members of all the armed services, so she's in a prime position to preach the gospel of MCMAP.

POPULAR OPINION

What do Marines think about the first female airman to become certified to teach their art?

"It's impressive," Dunn said. "It's good to see airmen appreciate the value of training. I commend anybody who does that. We all take the same oath to preserve and protect the Constitution."

Wright said he admires Field's accomplishments, which offer tangible proof of the validity of MCMAP. "It works for all who decide to be part of it," he added. "Going through the training process is the same for everyone — there's no special treatment. The training has been proven for both men and women in combat, not only physically but also mentally."

Marine 2nd Lt. Aleksandra Sawyer, who owns a MCMAP gray belt, said she thinks Field is awesome. The two recently rolled at Fort Meade, Maryland, where they took turns submitting each other. Field found herself tapping when her elbow clicked painfully during a submission attempt from the Marine, and Sawyer had to fight off several chokes initiated by Field. The Marine fought valiantly against one such choke but finally tapped as her face turned purple.

Both Field and Dunn said the pain they experience in the gym — including those occasions when an old injury gets tweaked and the blood supply to the brain gets momentarily halted — is worth it. The reason is simple: That kind of "hard Corps" training ultimately increases the odds that they'll survive on the battlefield.

GUIDE TO THE MARINE CORPS MARTIAL ARTS PROGRAM

To download "MACE (USMC): How the Martial Arts Center of Excellence Produces Fierce H2HC Fighters Through MCMAP," go to blackbeltmag.com and click on "free guides" in the navigation bar.

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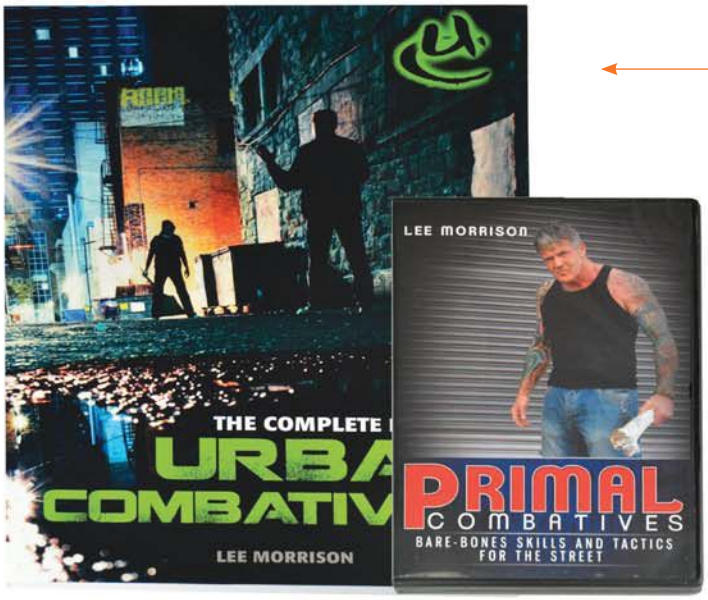

LEE MORRISON'S COMBATIVES COURSES

In conjunction with Paladin Press, self-defense authority Lee Morrison has released a 215-minute DVD set titled *Primal Combatives* and a 187-page text titled *The Complete Book of Urban Combatives.* They offer martial artists a chance to learn Morrison's hard-core approach to stopping thugs and criminals.

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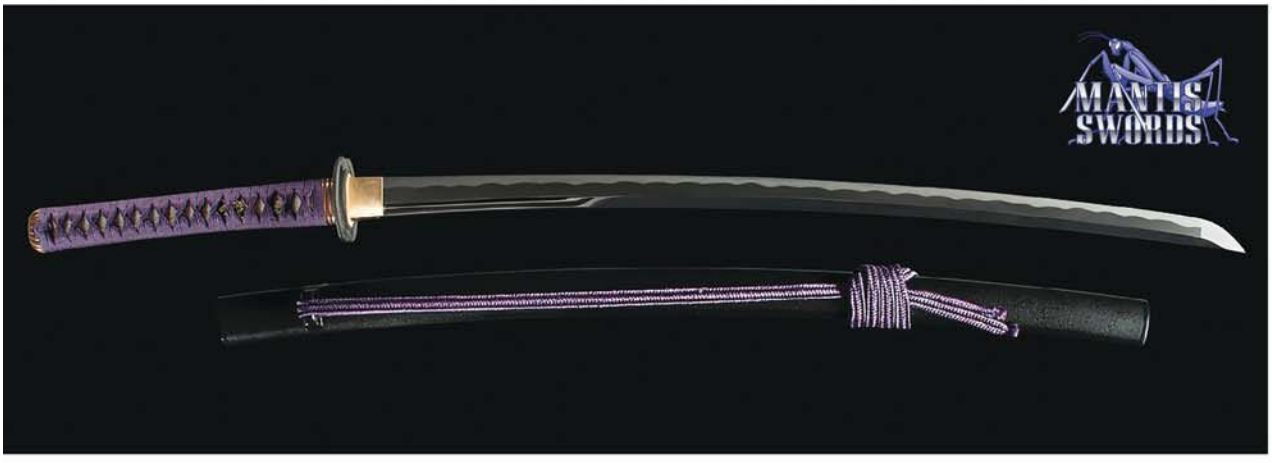

High-Quality Asian and European Weapons at Reasonable Prices

by Floyd Burk

Admit it — you love swords. In fact, there's a good chance you own one. If you don't, you probably want one. Bad.

Word to the wise: Don't try to satisfy your craving for a long blade by buying a cheapo. You'll quit using it after you take your first few swings. It's much better to buy a sword that's worth owning — such as the ones distributed by Mantis Swords.

"THE COMPANY started in 1997 with myself and two friends," said Shawn Salafia, one of Mantis Swords' co-owners. "We had a martial arts class together, and we did not want to spend several thousand dollars on a sword. Consequently, we started the company just to order swords for ourselves. Later, we started ordering for other practitioners in the class, and the company was born."

From those humble beginnings, Mantis (mantisswords.com) grew into one of the largest online sword stores on Earth. It now ships product to more than 48 countries and military bases around the world.

The Mantis inventory runs the gamut of Asian weaponry. It includes items for all the traditional Japanese blade arts, as well as Chinese- and European-style swords. Those who prefer more exotic offerings like Viking throwing axes and Lion Heart swords are also in luck, as are enthusiasts who are drawn to ninja weapons, sword canes and knives.

Why is interest in swords and related tools and implements spreading so rapidly within the martial arts community? "That's an easy one," Salafia said. "People are practicing [with weapons] earlier in their martial arts career. This just naturally increases the swording pool."

ONE OF THE KEYS to successful swordsmanship is having a quality blade to train with, Salafia said. You want a real weapon, not a fake one. A fake sword that you pick up at a strip mall is like a kit car. On the outside, it may look like a Lamborghini, but underneath, it's just a dune buggy chassis and motor. When subjected to hard use, a subpar sword — just like a kit car — will begin falling apart. I should know; I've made the mistake of buying a few over the years.

Those sword shortcomings stemmed just from doing basic technique drills. Forget about trying *tameshigiri* (test-cutting) — unless you want to take your life into your own hands.

Mantis strives to make sure such catastrophes don't befall its customers. "We have used and have cut with every sword we offer, unlike other companies," Salafia said. "Personally, I use the Golden Oriole model and have been cutting with it since 1998. When taken care of, a quality sword can last for many years."

While quality is essential, Salafia cautions martial artists in the market for a sword not to go overboard. If all you want is a functional blade for cutting and training, you don't need to take out a second mortgage on your house. The middle of the price continuum is where you want to be, he said. "[Our swords] look as nice and cut just as well as some of the more expensive swords sold around the country."

If, on the other hand, you're looking for an objet d'art, you'll need to take extra precautions. If you're considering buying a sword that's advertised as an antique or an "investment," have it appraised by a professional before you commit, Salafia said. "There are a lot of fakes out there."

FOR ALL OTHER potential sword buyers, Mantis aims to simplify the selection and purchase procedures. "Our mission is to be the best provider of high-quality Asian and European weapons at reasonable prices with the very best customer service," Salafia said.

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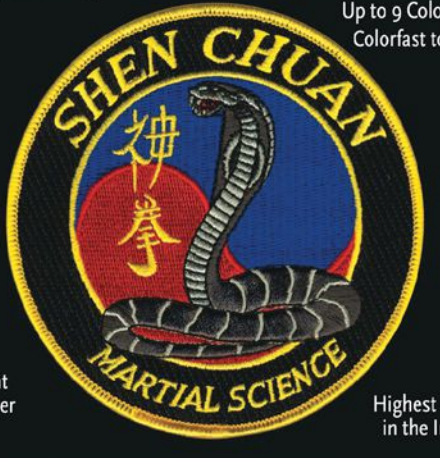

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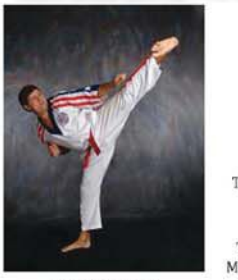

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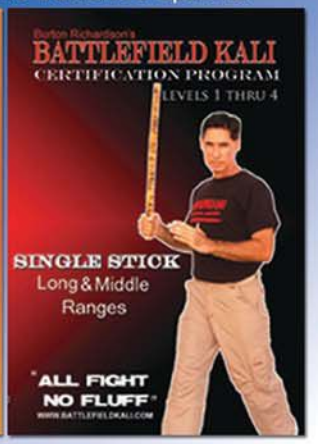

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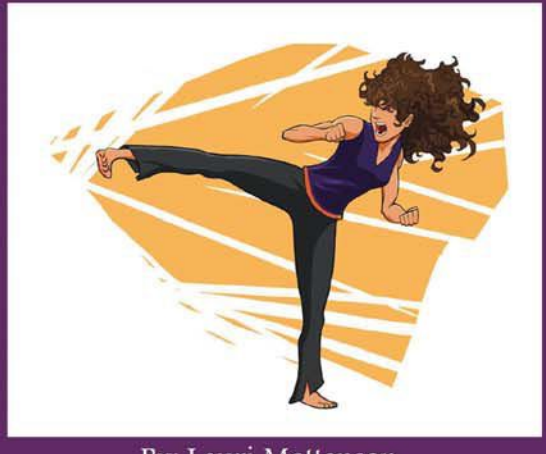

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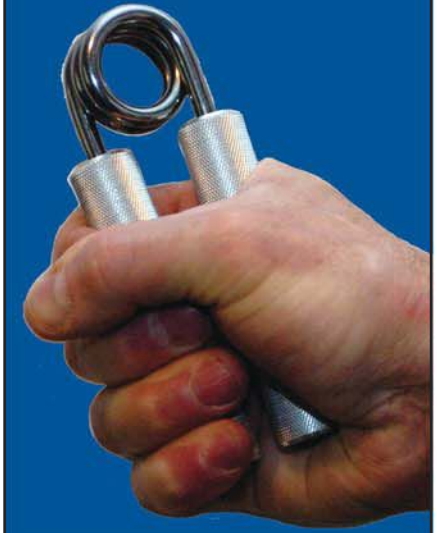

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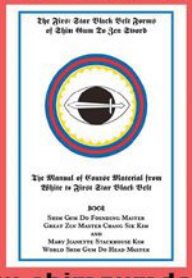

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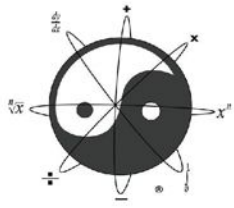

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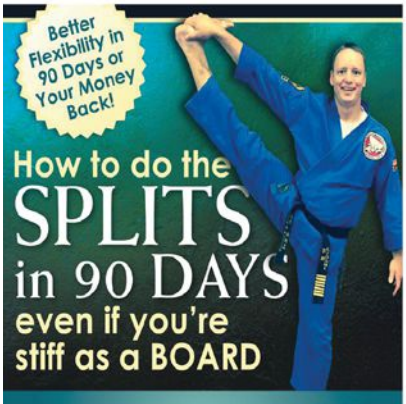

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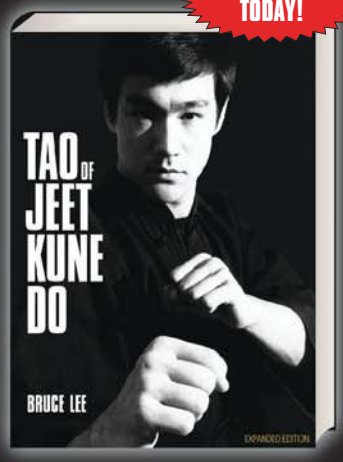

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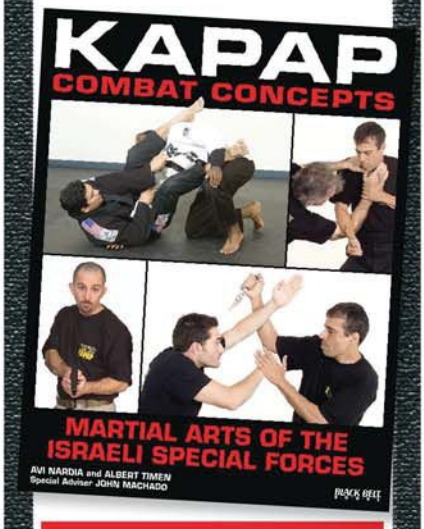

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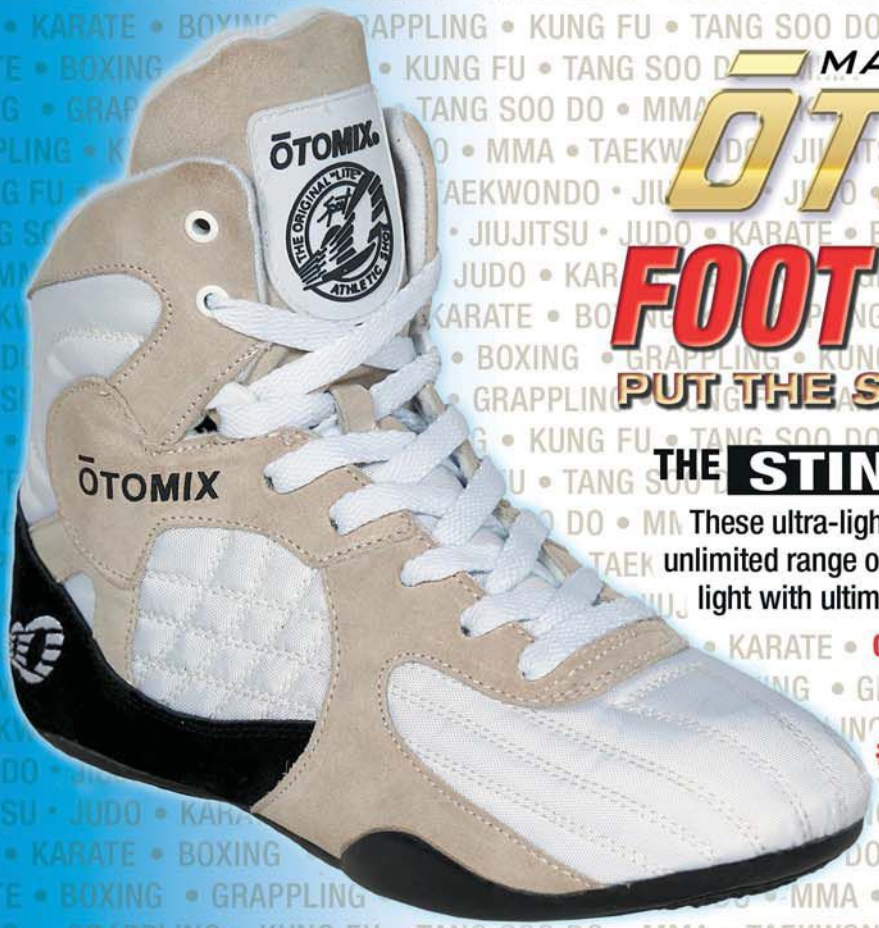

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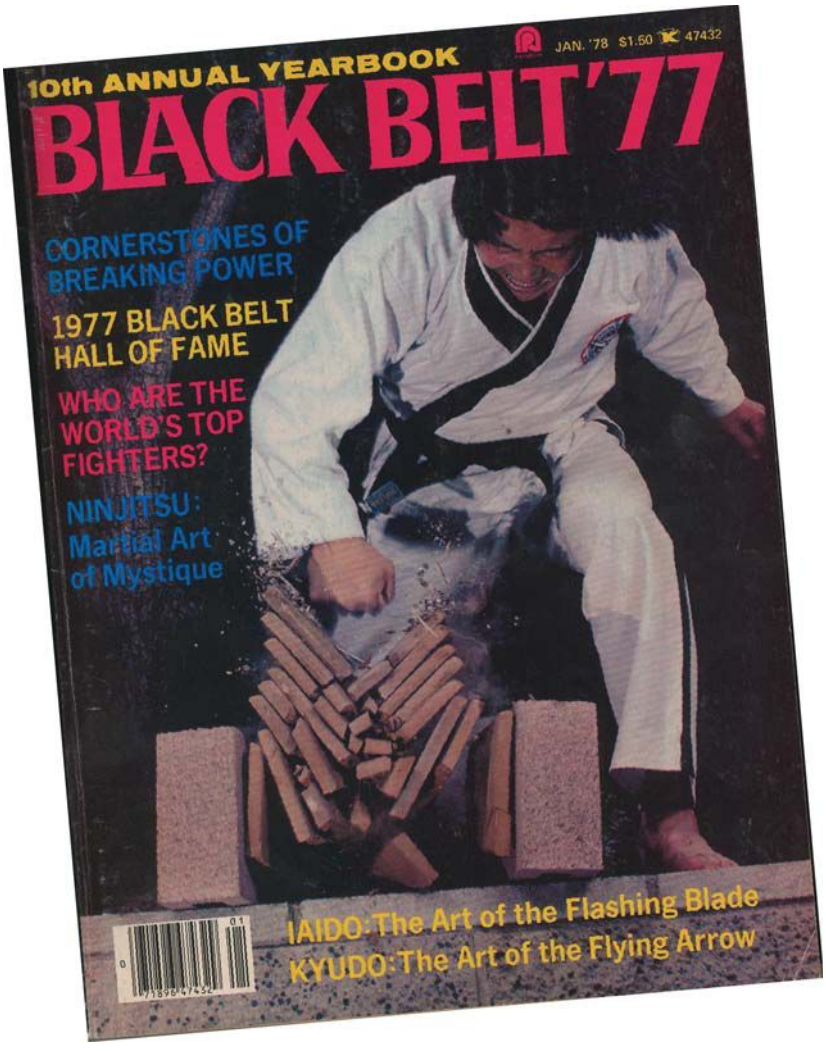

From the Archives

Vol. 16, No. 1, $1.50

The 169th issue of *Black Belt* was dated January 1978. The expanded edition was 100 pages long and featured *taekwondo* stylist Pu Gill Gwon on the cover.

• The higher page count is intended to give the editors room to announce the 1977 *Black Belt* Hall of Fame inductees: Man of the Year — Chuck Norris, Karate Player of the Year — Bill Wallace, Judo Player of the Year — Allen Coage (who's also ranked the No. 1 male *judoka* in the United States), Judo Instructor of the Year — Hayward Nishioka, Karate Instructor of the Year — Glenn Keeney, Kung Fu Artist of the Year — Al Dacascos, and Special Recognition — Dan Inosanto.

• Chuck Norris elects not to join the roster of actors who will be added to the cast of *Game of Death* as the producers labor to finish the film.

• Bill Wallace speaks out in defense of his friend, the late Elvis Presley. Seems a photo of Presley kicking Wallace in the gut was published, along with words that accused "the King" of abusing a "hapless sparring partner." Not true, Wallace says.

• "People who have never tried to break a glass bottle think it is so hard," Pu Gill Gwon says. "Actually, it is one of the easier materials to break. The only important factor in achieving the technique is speed."

• The No. 10–ranked *karateka* in Japan is *kyokushin* stylist Joko Ninomiya. He will later relocate to the United states and found *enshin* karate and the Sabaki Challenge.

• "I don't think *kyudo* is all *satori,* and it's not all hitting the target," says Bill Buntin, instructor of Japanese archery. "Kyudo is life."

• In an ad for its popular kicking jeans, Century Martial Arts gets provocative: "The secret? It's in the crotch." The copy is referring, of course, to the gusset, which permits maximum mobility when lifting legs.

• "I tore this guy up — ate him like an alligator," says Don G. Trent, a *kendo*-obsessed U.S. Air Force chief master sergeant stationed in Japan. "I know for sure this guy was a better kendo player, but I didn't give him a chance to find this out. To this day, he still doesn't know he was a better player, technically speaking, than I was." No shortage of self-confidence there!

• Something you didn't know about Dan Inosanto: "For two years, I trained simultaneously under both Ed Parker and Bruce Lee," Inosanto says. "And on Saturdays, I taught part of the day for Ed and part of the day for Bruce."

• "When you're practicing *chi sao,* you are already developing what is necessary for your kicking techniques by practicing your moving stance," says *wing chun* stylist Augustine Fong. "Chi sao is the one exercise that develops what's useful for kicks by letting you practice with your hands."

• Donnie Williams becomes grand champion at Ed Parker's 14th Annual International Karate Championships. He registers *during* the event, right after a judging controversy erupts between Williams and Sam Shockley. Williams goes on to defeat Shockley and five other opponents for the title.

• *Black Belt* names the top male karateka in the United States: Dan Anderson, James Cook, Steve Fisher, Steve Mackey, Ray McCallum, Sam Shockley, Ernie Smith, Ray Sua, Bobby Tucker and Keith Vitali. Hmm … seems like Donnie Williams ought to be on that list.

(Note: Back issues are not for sale.)

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$29.99

Tabi Socks

Black Nylon
Split Toe
One Size
$3.49

$39.99

Golden Dragon Sword Set of 3
Sharp Stainless Steel Blades-Katana is 39.5" overall. Come with 3 sword wood stand-Golden Dragon is printed on the scabbard.

$19.99

Double Edge Black Throwers w/leg sheth
Size 6.5"overall, 4.25"blade. Has 6 knives w/cord wrapped handles. Comes with Leg wrap nylon sheath.

Portable Wing Chun Dummy

6' Tall - Wooden
Some easy assembly
Fits anywhere
Approx. 50 lbs.
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Hand Claw
Wear with foot spikes and climb anywhere! Curved spikes and strong adjustable straps.
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Grappling Hook
Collapsible construction, heavy duty black steel, 33ft. long rope.
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Foot Spikes
Sharpened black steel spikes. *Tabi not included.*

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Ninja Fighting Swords
Twin Ninja Fighting swords that combine together by magnets to form one round handle Ninja sword. Includes nylon sheath w/carrying shoulder strap

3 Pcs. Throwing Spike Set with Wrist Strap

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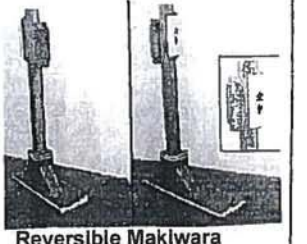
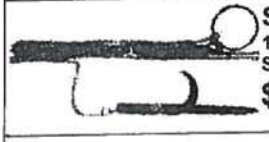
The Punisher Knife
A fantasy forearm sword, with handle, strap & nylon sheath-27.5"overall, 15"SHARP stainless steel blade



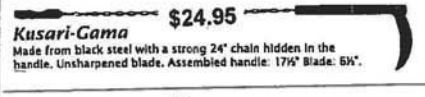
Reversible Makiwara w/Floor Stand $99.99

Tough'en them hands-This workout Makiwara is reversible for heavy duck canvas hitting or the tough Rope workout. Size is, stand 56"tall-base 28"x12"-Canvas makiwara 12"x4.75", Rope 11.25"x7"-approx 35lbs)-This is a natural wood product. There may be variations in color & looks.-*Patten Pending

Shogee



13" Head - 115" Chain
Solid Steel
$24.95



Kusari-Gama **$24.95**
Made from black steel with a strong 24" chain hidden in the handle. Unsharpened blade. Assembled handle: 17½" Blade: 6¼".

Ninja Tanto w/Spikes & Caltrops

Large 13.75" Overall
SS Black Blade
3 Throwing Spikes
Set of 10 Caltrops
Comes with Sheath
$19.99

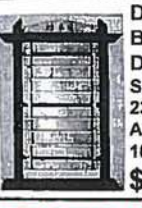
Throwing Knives - Set of 3

6.5" long
440 Stainless Steel
Nylon carry case
$9.99

Expandable Steel Batons

With Nylon Carry Case

16" long $21.99
26" long $25.00
21" long $24.99
31" long $29.99



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